



ART AND THE CAMERA

BY ANTONY GUEST



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ART AND THE CAMERA

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CLOVER

By J. CRUWYS RICHARDS

ART AND THE CAMERA

BY

ANTONY GUEST

WITH FORTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS



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ART AND THE CAMERA

OUTLINE

IN the many excellent handbooks on the technical side of photography, the amateur may find all the information necessary to make him a skilful craftsman; but guidance is not so readily available when he wishes to go a step further, and to picture his personal impression of Nature's moods. Such an aspiration should engage sympathy, if only because of the afflicting capacity of the camera for recording the commonplace, its effrontery in stating platitudes, and its perversity in emphasizing things of no importance. It has, in fact, certain of the qualities of a bore, and seldom fails to manifest them when left to its own devices. The desire to curb this primitive tendency, which has in it something of the exuberance and assurance of uninstructed youth, and to discipline photography in the service of art, is becoming very prevalent, and it is partly the object of the present volume to show how the process of reformation is proceeding.

For a photograph to be artistic, it is requisite that it should be made by one who has artistic impulses, and is guided by artistic principles. There is no short cut to proficiency, and no one can teach another to make a picture, or even to shoot straight,

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for, when all has been said, much depends in the last resort on the ability and temperament of the individual. But what may be done is to facilitate his task by arming him with principles to guard him from error, by showing him examples that should stimulate his emulation, and by offering him suggestions that may point the way to unsuspected delight. Such is my main purpose in preparing this book. The principles that I have set forth are not to be taken as representing any particular "school"; they are those that have become established in my mind as the result of a critical examination of modern art, and a habitual observation of nature, and while I venture to think that they are in accord with the art-spirit of the day, it has also seemed to me that they are particularly applicable to the needs of photography.

I should be sorry to speak disrespectfully of the scepticism that undoubtedly exists as to the artistic possibilities of the camera, for at one time I also doubted; neither am I going to show the exaggerated zeal of the convert, for I recognize that a good deal remains to be done before photography can establish itself firmly among the arts. I hope, however, incidentally to prove that it is not disqualified as an artistic medium, and more than that, to demonstrate by the aid of those who have so kindly lent me pictures for use as illustrations, that it has produced results fulfilling the essential requirements of works of art. While expressing gratitude to the owners of the prints here reproduced, I have regretfully to acknowledge that, in spite of careful workmanship, some of their charm has unavoidably been sacrificed to the necessity of reducing them to the compass of this volume. For

OUTLINE

this reason, too, the remarks that I have made in directing attention to what have seemed to me the special merits of the works, may in some instances miss their point.

It should be understood that the aim in making these pictures has been not so much to represent the subjects as to develop their artistic possibilities. I think it necessary to lay stress on this because so many photographers find it difficult to get away from the idea of representation in the sense of imitation; but I hope in discussing the pictures as object lessons at least to make it clear that there is much richer material to be drawn from Nature than is obtained by mere copying.

Through the hospitality of the "Amateur Photographer" I have been enabled to offer a quantity of advice and criticism directed to the substitution of character, feeling, and decorative arrangement, for mechanical representation, and the arguments have been received in such good part that it is tempting to take advantage of the editor's courtesy in permitting me to restate them, but where this has occasionally been done they appear in a revised form. It may well be thought that there is much for the amateur picture-maker to learn, but in reality the task is not so appalling as it looks. It is remarkable how the needful qualities merge. A sense of composition implies a close regard for line and mass, emphasis and simplification, and a comprehensive appreciation of a design as a whole; if the values are accurate, the aerial perspective and the general tone of the work will be good; and if, in combination with these qualities there is imaginative personal feeling, the picture will assuredly be expressive.

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Such matters are dealt with in a somewhat discursive way, without any notion of producing a cut-and-dried text-book that will tell the reader exactly what to do; it is rather sought to bring his æsthetic and intellectual faculties into play on the various branches of the subject, so that there may be a stirring of ideas with reasonable principles as their basis. Though well aware of the proverbial danger of giving reasons for critical or any other kind of judgement, I have endeavoured to do so throughout, for it has seemed to me that unless the artistic impulse has a logical foundation it is very likely to go astray; and at least in finding arguments to oppose to the views expressed, the aspirant must inevitably widen his own artistic horizon. If he can be induced to think about, and to grip the meaning of the qualities that will make his work pictorial, a great part of the present object will have been attained; but the book is also designed for the assistance of those who are advancing still further in the artistic use of photography.

IS PHOTOGRAPHY AN ART?

The question whether photography is to rank among the fine arts, or is for ever doomed to a poor relationship to pictorial work, comparable as some think to that of machinery to the art-crafts, has been a fruitful subject of discussion, and if the work of the camera as it has usually been presented is meant, I should incline to a decided answer in the negative. But if the artist can express himself and give a true translation of Nature, I



DAISIES

By CARINE CADBY

IS PHOTOGRAPHY AN ART?

see no reason for taking exception to his medium, whatever it may be. Some point to the mechanical qualities of photography as a bar to its artistic possibilities, and if the mechanical influence were so strong as to exclude imagination, this contention must prevail. It has, however, been demonstrated that personal expression is to some extent possible, and it may reasonably be argued that just so far as this possibility goes, photography is an art. Perhaps it may be said that it does not yet go all the way. This is a view that exponents of pictorial photography are setting themselves very energetically to controvert, and some notion of the degree of success that they have attained is to be gathered by the critical from the present group of pictures.

A picture is formed in the artist's mind before it makes its appearance on paper or canvas, and the real test of any medium is the degree in which it enables him to realize his conception. Now most artists find that this mental picture has to undergo some unintentional modification through the failure of the hand completely to carry out the instruction of the brain, perhaps in consequence of technical disability resulting from the quality of the medium. Artists are subject to such limitations, and to the character of the instruments that they are compelled to employ. They cannot *wish* their pictures to their canvases, but have to get them there as best they may by such means as are available. Hence few are able to realize their ideal absolutely, and sometimes one hears of those who have given up the attempt in despair.

Now if we grant for the moment that photography fails to some extent in the matter of com-

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plete expression, we may still take refuge in the extenuating circumstance that the brush itself is not without its shortcomings. Its efficiency, of course, depends on the degree of skill applied to the management of its peculiar characteristics, but this must always be something less than perfection. If it could be proved that photography brought an artist as near to his conception as he came through his brush, we should hesitate to say that the one was not, though the other certainly was, a medium of art. For it is the conception that counts, the truth and force of the message that the artist has to deliver, not the medium that he employs for stating it.

Beauties of execution constitute the adornment rather than the spirit of the message, albeit, if properly directed, they should be very helpful to the effect. Every medium has its characteristic charm, and photography certainly has beauties peculiar to itself, for beautiful photographs have been made in a way that would be impossible by other means.

It may be objected that even if a certain amount of personal control is possible to the photographer, there is always the fact that he has to rely on mechanical representation. This, indeed, seems to be at the root of the contention that photography is not an art. It might be replied that the instrument may sometimes succeed where the hand fails; but this idea is fraught with danger, for it might lead to too great a reliance on the mechanical agent, and too little regard for the essential need of personal expression. Yet when the relative importance of personal and mechanical representation has been adjusted, it may still be



LEOPARD'S BANE

By CARINE CADBY

IS PHOTOGRAPHY AN ART?

found that the machine can do something that the hand fails to accomplish, and the question arises whether this contribution must necessarily be rejected because it is not the result of direct and individual craftsmanship. The answer seems not very obscure. If the work of the machine is helpful to the realization of the scheme that the artist has imagined, he cannot afford to throw it over. If it is not helpful he cannot afford to retain it. But even in the latter case it need not necessarily be entirely rejected, for there is still the possibility that it may be so modified as to meet the required conditions. Even so there may be those who think that everything in a picture ought to be the artist's actual handiwork, and it may be useful to recall for their benefit the remark of a distinguished painter when some one pointed out that he had adopted the tone of the paper in a part of one of his pictures. "When I find that Providence has made a tone for me, I accept it thankfully." In the same grateful spirit a photographer might accept a tone made for him, if it happened to be correct, and if a tone, why not anything else?

Whether art is to be achieved through any medium, whatever, depends on the degree of scope afforded for individual discrimination, sentiment, and treatment. When photography is solely the work of the sun and the camera, finished off by the operation of certain chemical laws, it can by no possibility be an art. When it is the production of the same agents, modified by uninspired manipulation, it is still outside the pale. But when the individual is in control of the operation throughout, insisting on the attainment of his ideal,

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and preventing any appearances that he does not want, then, be the medium what it may, it holds the possibility of producing a work of art. It can give effect to the imagination of an artist. Fortunately, photography is in a great measure endowed with this faculty. In the selection of the subject, its composition, and the spirit of its treatment, the worker may have absolute control, and may give effect to his impression in the degree of his own skill. The methods are so various that he need have no difficulty in finding one suited to the particular requirements of his theme. He has a wide choice from the extreme delicacy of presentation exemplified in this book by Mr. and Mrs. Cadby, to the vigorous effects preferred by some others. Especially in gum-bichromate, which is now much in favour, there is available a flexible medium that responds readily to the heart's desire, and has a delightful transparency of texture, due to the free use of water in the process.

Yet a process that lends itself so readily to the modifications suggested by individual taste is not without danger, and the more imaginative and aspiring the amateur may be, the greater is his peril if his study of artistic principles has not kept pace with his experiments. The process, therefore, is only for the expert. Its fluidity of appearance and richness of colour are very charming, and Mr. J. Cruwys Richards, of whose work I am able to give some examples, was among the first and most successful of those who have brought out these qualities.

The degree of control possible to photography, that is the extent to which it can be made to respond to the ideal, varies with the different



SHEPHERD'S CLOCKS

By CARINE CADBY

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

methods employed. These have been thoroughly explained elsewhere, and it is not my intention to particularize them here. Leading experts declare that it is possible to carry out the will as completely by photography as by any other medium. Of course, not every one has such absolute command over the process; but the fact that it is possessed by some, and is to be acquired by others, makes it necessary to concede that photography at least bears the possibility of taking its place among the arts. After all, it is very young compared with painting, and is still capable of development.

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

In regard to the manner of development some interesting questions arise. There are already divisions in the ranks, and this is not an unhealthy sign, for wherever any object is pursued with zeal there are always some who choose one way and some who want to go another. There are extremists everywhere, and it is not surprising to hear from one section that the other side is a danger to the cause. On the one hand are those who believe only in "pure photography," who do not admit the legitimacy of hand work, and who specially object to evidences of the use of the brush, or to the production of any effects that are characteristic of another medium. The ideal of this section is the untouched photograph. On the other hand are those who advocate the utmost freedom of treatment, who manipulate their work

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until it has the appearance of oil or water-colour, chalk-drawing or etching, arguing that the end justifies the means, and that it does not matter how the result is arrived at so long as it is beautiful. This section recognizes no limitations, and I freely admit that many of the results that it produces are very charming, the only other criticism that they evoke being that they might in some instances have been obtained without the assistance of photography. In my view this is a serious objection. A medium necessarily has its special quality—water-colour its limpidity; oil its richness; etching its vivacity, piquancy, and precision of line; and the artist who loves his medium tries to show it at its best and to obtain the greatest advantage from its peculiar characteristics. Should not he who uses photography as an artistic medium do likewise? This is surely not accomplished if he gives his photographs the appearance of something else. One would not be doing justice to the beauty of a rosy-cheeked country girl if one dressed her *à la Pompadour*.

But the "pure photography" standpoint is also open to objection, for the camera's work needs much correction before it can claim to be artistic, and whether that correction be applied through the technical resources peculiar to photography or by direct hand-work seems to me to matter very little. On the whole, probably, the hand, as the most immediate instrument of the brain, offers the surest means of carrying out its behests. What does matter is that the artistic impulse should find full expression, that the spirit animating the artist should be carried into the raw material, by whatever means, and convert it into a thing of beauty.

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

But it is still possible in doing this to preserve the photographic character of the work, so that any one on looking at it should not mistake it for a wash or chalk drawing. Suppose an etcher made his work look like a photograph, what would be thought of him? The obvious remark would be that he evidently had no great love of etching for its own sake, and he had better take to photography.

The special characteristics of photography have not been defined, and it is true enough that the processes are so many and so divergent in the appearances they produce, that one unfamiliar with the subject might have a difficulty in finding the source of common relationship. One need not object to the evidence of any factors that are necessary to the production of the work. It is desirable rather that their traces should remain than be hidden. The only point is not to make them so overwhelmingly conspicuous as to obscure the greatest factor of all, the real source of the picture. A photograph should be a photograph first of all, and its modification or beautification by other means should be regarded as subsidiary. It might be imagined that one who esteemed photography as a medium would desire that his work should remain as evidently a photograph as hammered silver is evidently silver despite the hammering. The true theory is that the process to which a material is subjected should beautify it, not obliterate its character.

The art worker should feel the influence of his medium and recognize it instinctively, being as sensitive to it as a connoisseur of old china is to the touch of a particular paste. There certainly is

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through all the variations of photography a quality peculiar to itself; I do not pretend to define it, but I can say this, that if you attack it vigorously with hog-hair you are pretty certain to brush it away. It is possible that at a future time, for purposes of exhibition, a line will have to be drawn between works that are properly to be called photographs and those that are not. In that case a ground so brushed or painted over that nothing of the sun-picture is visible may be disqualified. But before this can be done the question of the distinctive quality of the medium will need the consideration of a committee of experts, and it is quite likely that they may be unable to arrive at a definition, though each of the members may be able to distinguish a photograph with certainty at sight. At least they should require that the softening influence of Light be permitted to remain, the spirit-touch that does not work in outlines, but imperceptibly merges tone with tone. Perhaps it is in this gentle manifestation of the spirit of photography that the recognition of the distinctive quality of the medium will be found.

SPIRIT OF THE MEDIUM

The spirit of Photography is Light, whose adroit fingers can draw with a gentle suggestiveness or a bold and sparkling touch. It is a wayward sprite, playful, unexpected, splendid and impressive by turns, and it is apt to grow softly poetical towards evening. Some of its daintiest handiwork is exemplified in Mrs. Cadby's pictures



DAFFODILS

By CARINE CADBY

SPIRIT OF THE MEDIUM

of flowers, which I have given a prominent place in this book, not only because she is the only lady contributor, but also in the hope that they may disconcert any cynic who happens to open the volume with the exclamation, "Photography artistic? Rubbish!"

Every one loves flowers, but usually they are valued for their own sake, and not for the jewelled effects that are produced among them by the influence of light, as when the morning sun tips their edges and enriches their colour in glowing through half transparent petals, or when they grow mysterious in twilight. Such variations should commend themselves to nature-lovers, who will bear in mind that simplicity, delicacy of texture and tone, and elegance of line, all combine to make up the essential character of flowers, and, after seeing these examples, will, no doubt, be impelled to depict them with lightness and piquancy.

There is a very delightful field open, and one that has not been very thoroughly exploited, in the representation of flowers, and I know of no more successful worker in this direction than Mrs. Carine Cadby. She has her own ideas as to the way in which the blossoms should be portrayed, and aims direct at the spirit of her subjects, their fragility, grace, and fineness of tone—she has not yet got so far as their scent. Simple beauties are those that appeal to her with most certainty, and, so far as I have seen, she does not concern herself particularly with the more gorgeous kinds. Floral charms, as she very rightly holds, do not need to be forced against dark backgrounds, and she takes the opposite, and decidedly more appropriate, course of showing them against light.

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This method brings out the fairy quality much more thoroughly than could be done by the contrast of a dark background, and is also more in the spirit of the blossoms, for are they not essentially creations of light? Mere imitation is not sought. Mrs. Cadby arranges the blossoms in such simple decorative groups as will illustrate the special expression they assume when she talks to them. Some one, I wish I could remember who, says you must talk to flowers if you would know them intimately—and she photographs them as they reply.

The extreme finesse of "Daisies," their piquant expression, and the spring and vitality of the lines, give this work an extraordinary charm. The tone of the blossoms, slightly deeper than that of their background, presents them in a novel aspect; for in depicting white flowers the familiar way is to emphasize their whiteness, as though they had not as much right to the subtle shades that they assume, especially when seen against light, as to their most dazzling appearance.

"Leopard's Bane" is notable for tenderness of tone and a marked feeling for line. These, indeed, are the special attributes of Mrs. Cadby's work, and they find their natural expression in the treatment of flowers. These pictures, it seems to me, should suggest new possibilities. Floral subjects will make their special appeal to every artist—Mr. Benington's decorative composition "A Rose Bush," for instance, shows quite a different, and a very individual feeling—and if the photographer devotes himself to bringing out the qualities that constitute the essence of the impression that he has received as thoroughly as is done in these in-



A ROSE BUSH

BY WALTER BENINGTON

SPIRIT OF THE MEDIUM

stances, he may rely on producing something worth the pains. It is an undertaking that demands a sensitive perception, and a selective and single-minded effort. The one certain road to failure is to attempt to reproduce all the qualities of the flower. Pictorial art cannot render everything; it is selectiveness that makes its charm.

The "Daffodils" are represented with a soft cast shadow, and it is remarkable how much relief they obtain from this in combination with the delicate background tone. This picture is, perhaps, more naturalistic than the other flower-subjects, a good deal of attention having been given to characteristic qualities, even to the texture of the petals. It will be noticed how the employment of the shadow helps the composition, and how extremely effective a design is obtained by simple means.

"Shepherds' Clocks," again, is a delightful example, remarkable no less for its decorative arrangement than for expressiveness, grace, and sympathetic craftsmanship. It is to be noted, too, that there is a subtle gradation of tone and emphasis that brings the nearest of the "clocks" into prominence, and gives distance to the furthest. The three heads form a beautiful line that harmonizes with the "movement" of the nearest stalk, while there is also extreme tenderness and exactitude of modelling. It is seldom that one sees so much beauty simply rendered in combination with such a pure feeling for line. So completely has the essence and character of these fluffy balls and their slender stems been caught, and so thoroughly are they divested of commonplace appearance, that the spirit of the medium seems to

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have sought out that of the subject. Still, it is the inspiration of the artist that has control. Light cannot be relied on to act alone, for it is a fettered fairy, hindered by material shackles, weighted by human products—chemicals and contrivances, very ingenious, and perhaps on the way to perfection, but as yet not all that they might be. Art helps by refining and transmuting the dross, and the allied effort results in increased beauty. Even if the spirit of photography were free, it could only mirror Nature, quite truthfully, but without discrimination. Through the aid of art may be pictured what is felt as well as what is seen.

CHILD STUDIES

A resemblance will be noted between the works of Mr. and Mrs. Cadby, as close as the affinity of flowers and children. Mr. Cadby's prints have a delicate expressiveness and vivacity of treatment that testify to a lively sympathy with childhood.

These little figures seem, as it were, to typify child-nature, and make us more than ever dissatisfied with the usual heaviness of child-photographs. Imagine these pictures weighted by dark shadows and realistic details. All the ethereal quality would be gone, and attention would be diverted from the sense of budding individuality that is now so happily felt. Mr. Cadby has aimed at the spirit, clearing away the commonplace, and leaving only the daintiest of products. These works, slight though they may seem, have the



STUDY OF CHILD

BY WILL CADBY

CHILD STUDIES

completeness arrived at by a process of elimination, not by an accumulation of "finish." Their strength lies in the unity of inspiration and execution.

Childhood offers inexhaustible material for pictorial work, and every one who has a camera must have felt the temptation of the unconscious beauty of children, whether they are seen in the frolicsome and graceful movements of play, or in their quieter moods, when they wonder innocently at a world that continually has new surprises for impressionable and undeveloped minds. The truth is that the portrayal of children is not easily accomplished. One may see a little girl with a skipping-rope and feel all the fascination of the subject, yet it may lead only to the wasting of many plates. To catch the right moment, to give the characteristic movement, at the same time to secure the likeness, and to impart a decorative motive to the design, are difficulties so great that to overcome them all can scarcely be looked for. Yet if any of these qualities are missed the outcome will so far fall short of success. The essence of play is its vivacity and quick movement, and if these are not suggested the result is tame. Consequently it is a more promising undertaking to depict children when they are quiescent, as Mr. Cadby has done, and then one may hope to render the fitting look and "movement." Some, perhaps, will not be content with the plain white background that seems appropriately to surround Mr. Cadby's little models with an atmosphere of purity; but so frail a thing as childhood may easily be overweighted by the solidity or even the splendour of its setting.

The essential characteristics of any subject should be understood, or at least they should be

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felt, and in regard to childhood they seem to be simplicity, delicacy, and animation. These should be reflected in the design. Simplicity of treatment, apart from its appropriate application to childhood, eliminates matters that might overmaster the interest due to the unsophisticated features and pose. If one shows a child in a splendid Gothic church, the little figure loses its importance to the degree in which attention is given to the architecture, and the picture is very likely to be one of a church with a child in it, rather than of a child in church.

Delicacy is also significant. There is delicacy of structure in the undeveloped bones and muscles, delicacy of line in limbs and features, and delicacy of tone and texture in the flesh tints and hair. Heavy tones and rigid lines would evidently be discordant with the tender freshness of childhood. Animation is perhaps a more difficult quality to attack, but aid will be found in piquancy of treatment, as Mr. Cadby has demonstrated. The touch should not seem laboured; the effect should be one of lightness and airiness throughout. Those who know how a curl can flutter and gleam, and how fleeting and elusive are the facial changes, may understand what is needed.

DELICACY

Delicacy is a great asset, particularly to a portrayal of landscape; for Nature is very delicate—especially in England, where the soft and moisture-



THE BABY BOY

By WILL CADBY

DELICACY

laden atmosphere is ever blending and harmonizing. There is always, however, the besetting danger of degenerating into weakness, and as a safeguard against this it is well to bear in mind that delicacy is valuable only in combination with decision and conviction. Here is a passage from Whistler that should be committed to memory. That keen observer remarks that the artist who has understood Nature's lesson "does not confine himself to purposeless copying, without thought, each blade of grass . . . but in the long curve of the narrow leaf, corrected by the straight, tall stem, he learns how grace is wedded to dignity, how strength enhances sweetness, that elegance may be the result."

There are many soft, gray pictures in which evidence of timidity produces a sensation of weakness, instead of the feeling of reserved force—a vital quality, obtainable by bold, broad treatment and liberal simplification. Those who cultivate delicacy should seek it rather in the general effect than in the handling of details; indeed, it is through smallness of treatment—through the attempt to be no less exquisite in definition than in effect—that so many pictures achieve only prettiness. Delicacy, again, should be fortified by suggestion; but the tones themselves should be subtle enough to suggest all that is necessary. To help them out with a highly elaborated statement of detail is to imply that they are insufficient. Singleness of purpose is one of the sources of strength; a double aim is a cause of weakness. If, therefore, one wishes to emphasize the general tenderness of a scheme, the message is only weakened by the sharp definition of particular objects; for, however deftly rendered,

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they must militate against the softening influence of the atmosphere, and the gentle play of all-enveloping light. Details, moreover, are of secondary importance to the main intention; but they are very apt to compete with it for notice, and this is a state of things to be avoided if the delicacy of the conception is to make a strong appeal.

“Strength enhances sweetness that elegance may be the result.” This is the secret of the success of Mr. and Mrs. Cadby in the particular directions that they have chosen, and the principle is illustrated, too, by Mr. Arbuthnot in the treatment of landscape, especially in “After Rain” and “Reaping on the Hillside.” The former is a singularly poetical rendering of the effect of a brightening sky on a drenched landscape, and the delightfully atmospheric appearance has been obtained through remarkable delicacy of tone. This, however, would be insufficient without the strength that is felt in the effective composition and in the correctness of illumination; in fact there is always a source of strength for the most delicate of workmanship in the discriminating use of light—the spirit of the medium. In this picture will be recognized an attribute that removes it very far from the ordinary level of photography; it hints at the storm that has passed and at the brightness that is coming, and this quality of suggestiveness, of getting beyond the instant of exposure and of showing a subject in the light of human intelligence, is one of the greatest merits that the artistic photographer can impart to his work. A picture has been defined as “something between a thought and a thing.” The human eye in looking at the thing cannot dissociate itself from the thought; but



AFTER RAIN

By M. ARBUTHNOT

PROGRESS

the camera, without personal aid, is only concerned with objects, and has nothing to do with ideas.

"Reaping on the Hillside" is a beautiful picture of no less delicate tone, and it derives strength from the vigorous lines of the composition as well as from the admirably placed point of emphasis furnished by the reaper and horses and the high light on the man's coat. This, again, is an exceedingly atmospheric work, with delightfully tender tones in the distance and a well observed illumination that brings out the foreground and causes it to take its place, despite the simplicity of its treatment. The sympathetic method of the artist conveys a sense of the haze of heat permeating the landscape, and gives evidence not only of a refined feeling for tone, but also of a rare sensitiveness to Nature.

PROGRESS

Nothing stands still, so unless we assume that photography has reached its zenith and is on the way to decadence, we have to conclude that it must inevitably advance. Indeed, signs of improvement are not lacking. In scientific and record work photography has a function that every one respects; but the real question seems to be whether progress must be confined to these lines and to the widening of technical resources, or may also take effect in the direction of pictorial achievement. Truly, when one considers the great mass of mechanical and lifeless production in portraiture and landscape, it is here that there seems to be

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the greatest scope for advance. Something more vital has been wanted than fashionable professional portraits and trade views of scenery, and it was this need that led to the formation of the "Linked Ring," the nucleus of the Photographic Salon seventeen years ago.

This Society, composed entirely of amateurs, held to the possibility of endowing the work of the camera with pictorial composition, atmosphere, and personal temperament, and has pursued its experiments regardless of the frequently expressed opinion that photography is not, and never can be, an art. The popular view, however, is by no means to be relied on in artistic matters. Most people have been satisfied with a recognizable likeness, especially if carefully finished with a polished surface like wax, and have not asked for revelation of character or effects of light. In landscape they have required only the purely topographical, with such precise definition that familiar objects could be clearly identified; while atmosphere and imagination have not been much demanded, perhaps because it has been taken for granted that they were not to be supplied. Professionals have been content to benefit by the public taste; they have touched up their negatives, endowing the eyes of their sitters with more than earthly brilliance, and smoothing away wrinkles and expression "at one fell swoop." It must be admitted that this sort of thing has pleased their customers, and one suspects that ordinary humanity is not proof against the charms of a so-called "flattering" portrait, the kind of thing that gives an artificial glamour to individuals estimable enough under the ordinary conditions of life, and



REAPING ON THE HILLSIDE

By M. ARBUTHNOT

PROGRESS

presents them not as they are, nor even as they would like to be if the choice were left to them, but as they happen to appear under the manipulation of an ingenious tradesman who has learnt by experience how to avert the misfortune of having his prints returned. There are some who still think that the mechanical precision of the ordinary photograph must necessarily be truth, forgetting that there is a higher truth than this. The trade gave them the kind of truth that they wanted, and had no part in developing the æsthetic possibilities of photography.

Professionals have been left behind, partly because they, after all, have to look at commercial possibilities and to supply the popular demand, which for the most part does not extend beyond commonplace exactitude, modified by superficial prettiness. In time expressiveness may be valued more than mechanical accumulation of facts, and artistic principles may take the place of uninstructed embellishment. There is even a gleam of hope in this very demand for cheap beautification, since it at least shows the germ of a desire for something different from the bare statement of an unsympathetic instrument, and suggests a latent wish for intelligent perception in the rendering. The progressive impulse has so far taken effect in an entirely amateur movement, but probably the trade will find it necessary to follow, for exhibitions are so frequent, and amateur photographers are so numerous and so widely interested in the artistic side of their work, that people are gradually becoming familiar with a better type of photograph, and in future may not be satisfied with the standard of the Nineteenth Century album.

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In fact, the portraits of respectable folk who lived in the latter half of this absorbing period are very likely to cause coming generations to smile, and even to grieve, when they compare them with the miniatures, prints, and paintings of earlier and more picturesque ancestors. When photography supplanted miniature painting it supplied a poor substitute for all the delicate beauty that had been lavished on the portrayal of contemporary humanity. The philosophical Briton did not give way to sorrow, he even delighted in the cheapness of the new means of registering his more or less impressive features. It was a time when public taste was at a low ebb, and the invention fell in very comfortably with the prevailing ideals. But now there are signs of reaction. Miniature painting revives, and photography is leavened by an artistic spirit that is already carrying it to a higher plane.

The youthful sins of the process may now be forgiven, though no doubt it helped to confirm a materialistic age in its acceptance of unimaginative representation. Painters, especially portrait painters, being unwittingly brought into competition with machine-made exactitude, had to school their genius to such laboured precision as would suffice to prevent indiscriminating patrons from remarking that they could have got a better likeness for a shilling. Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney had not to compete with mechanically produced likeness, and that is one reason why the Nineteenth Century was unable to surpass, or even to equal, their work in portraiture. No one can say how far the painters of the past succeeded or failed in the matter of likeness, but it may be suspected that from the point of view of the

LESSON FROM PAINTING

modern person who takes the productions of the camera as his criterion, much of their work would have been regarded as unsatisfactory. In old letters and memoirs the achievements of great masters in the matter of likeness are not always discussed with approbation. But in the absence of the photographic criterion, painters were, in a far greater measure than at the present day, free to explore beyond superficial appearances, and might even dare to pass them over in seeking the spirit of a personality, and in giving free play to their own inspiration.

A good deal of the hard precision, and consequent lack of atmosphere, that is to be met with in many characteristic examples of Victorian art, is probably due to the photographic influence.

LESSON FROM PAINTING

There can be no question that the art of painting, especially landscape work, through the example of the *plein air* school, has made great strides in recent years, and if at one time artists allowed themselves to be misled by photography, they have now their turn, and can show photographers how they may pursue Nature with hope of success. The lesson is being taken to heart enthusiastically by photographic societies, and by a growing body of amateurs who welcome a means of gratifying their aspiration to record and perpetuate the happy moments in which Nature has revealed to them some of her elusive charms.

ART AND THE CAMERA

It is a lesson that teaches us to look for the poetry of Nature through her moods and larger expressions of form and colour, and through the all-enveloping influences of atmosphere and light, rather than to study little truths such as absorbed the Pre-Raphaelites in their earnest wish to represent Nature as she really was. They, to use a homely, but singularly expressive phrase, "could not see the forest for the trees." Instead of seeking to represent a whole effect they endeavoured to build it up by an accumulation of details each of which was separately and elaborately rendered, so that with the undue importance given to accessories, there was no scope for expressiveness where it was really wanted. A similar defect appertains to uncontrolled photography, for the eye of the camera is quite unselective, and, unlike the human eye, finds no point of primary interest on which it may dwell, no mystery to enhance the beauty of the prospect, and to deepen the significance of the point that chiefly commands attention.

The lesson of modern art, moreover, urges us candidly to accept appearances as they present themselves to the individual, to take them as they look to us, not as we know them to be, or assume that they ought to be. It is essentially concerned with personal vision, and, though seemingly a simple matter, this is really one of the most difficult as well as one of the most fundamental of the principles that the photographer who wishes to place himself in the line of progress is called upon to grasp. He must learn to see, and by this is meant that he must accustom himself to recognize the artistic aspect, which is really, also, the vital essence of his subject. The artistic portrayal of



LESSON FROM PAINTING

Nature is necessarily individual. "Art is Nature seen through a temperament"; so the predilections of the artist must have full scope. His inspiration is drawn direct from Nature, and modified only by his own temperament. This precludes the copying of the methods of others.

Method, however, is concerned with execution, and is of less importance than the conception, which is the foundation of the work. If the basis is weak the superstructure falls, however skilful it may be. On the other hand, if the conception is vital and true, the work at least has the elements of life, even though the treatment be clumsy. Both conception and treatment should be individual, and, while the student may be guided by principles, he should gradually learn to carry them out by methods that accord with his own temperament. If he is content to imitate the handiwork of others his own feeling loses its most direct means of expression.

These remarks will, I think, convey some idea of the spirit that has animated the amateurs who left the Photographic Society in 1889, and grouped themselves together to form the Photographic Salon. Its first exhibition was held at the Dudley Gallery in 1893, but the early efforts no doubt left much to be desired, and perhaps afforded some justification for the refusal of the critical public, as well as the old-fashioned photographer whose ideal was a clear and precise negative, to take them seriously. Some of the exhibitions contained prints that were dubbed "eccentric," but so-called eccentricity is not necessarily a fault, for it often means effort in a new direction, the cutting out of a path that may lead to a vista of beauty—or,

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perchance, to a quagmire. Such adventures are essential to progress, for repetition and decadence are synonymous. But the members were feeling their way. They were full of zeal, and by dint of innate pictorial impulse, aided by observation and study, have since been able to show in their annual exhibitions a degree of skill and taste that has won admiration. In this way has been stimulated the ambition of many who have taken up photography as a hobby, and earnestly desire to make it a means of expressing their love of Nature and their feeling for what is beautiful. The Society has, in fact, clearly demonstrated that so much personal control may be given to the selection, composition, and technical handling of a subject as to furnish plenty of scope for the personal mood or sentiment. This is undoubtedly a great step towards realizing the aspiration that photography may one day be ranked as an art.

Public sympathy has been gradually won over, and has in fact manifested itself so unmistakably that the Royal Photographic Society has been tempted to follow the example of the Salon by holding an annual exhibition of pictorial work at the New Gallery, and this section always proves much more generally attractive than the great mass of technical production that is shown. It is gratifying to know that the pictorial development of photography is entirely of English origin. The example has been followed very zealously in Europe, in America, and in some of our Colonies, and the frequent exhibition of English work abroad, and of foreign prints in this country, has done much to foster a fraternal feeling among workers in pictorial photography of all nations, and

LATENT TALENT

also to promote an increase of knowledge and an extension of technical methods.

LATENT TALENT

It is sometimes said that the English are in-artistic as a nation, and it is perfectly true that the keenness of commercial competition often brings about a deplorable destruction of beauty, but there are evidences among us of a good deal of latent and unsuspected appreciation of the pure delights of line and colour. Much, probably most, of the artistic feeling of our countrymen has no outlet, and anything that provides it with a means of expression must be regarded as a contribution to the general good. Things were different in old times when the handicrafts flourished and craftsmen had an opportunity to direct such artistic impulse as they possessed to the enrichment of their work. Indeed, when one looks at old furniture, ironwork, pottery, and buildings, one feels the injustice of the aspersion on the English capacity for art. It may have slumbered, for the pressure of life leaves little time for art-work, and individual taste is scarcely called for in mechanical industries. But the sentiment of beauty is still alive and photography offers a convenient means of enabling it to manifest itself in a definite and individual way.

One cannot hope to be a painter without a course of study that is impossible for those occupied in other ways. But if one has artistic aspirations photography comes to his aid, and lands him just where he might be after a year or two at

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an art school. He might then give a representation of Nature with a pencil or brush, no better than the owner of a camera could produce without any such experience.

Thus the photographer has a good start with the power of imitating Nature ready made; but this is only a beginning. Nature should not be taken at her own valuation. To follow Nature is, of course, the artist's duty, but he should follow her in spirit, not in letter. Nature cares nothing for the exigencies of picture-making; she gives you beauties with both hands—a profusion of delights, and you may take what you want and leave the rest. This is where the artist comes in. He selects what is expressive of the whole, and arranges it sparingly, with a discriminating regard for pictorial requirements. If he does not arrive at this, and contents himself with the mere unsifted mass, he fails in his mission, staying his hand at the very point where his duty begins—the point that marks the difference between art and imitation.

Sometimes Nature is so charming that we may get a beautiful result by simply taking her as she is. In such kindly mood she may even arrange our picture for us, with all the lines, masses, and tones complete. It would take a Stoic to refuse this sort of gift. The scheme, however, is not often carried to its fullest pictorial possibility, and there is the danger of thinking it more complete than it really is. In such a case it should be remembered that the artist's function is quite a minor one. It may be rejoined that he has selected his scene, and has watched and waited for the right effect. He has pursued his quarry with the subtlety of an Indian, and has caught it on the wing.



PLAYTIME

By WILL CADBY

THE DREAM CITY

Does he not deserve credit? Yes, and something more than the credit that is due to the trapper, for he has certainly displayed some pictorial discernment. But, after all, he has only represented Nature, he has not interpreted her, and that is the test of the artist. I fear that in this remark I may be touching a few readers in a tender place, but it is just as well to understand that the mere ability to select a scene at the happy moment and to depict it by "pure photography" does not make an artist, though it is evident that there are many who think that they need attempt no more.

THE DREAM CITY

It may well be that the modest amateur, though sensitive to beauty, and desiring to express himself, may doubt his qualification to enter the Dream City of Art, whose magic beauty offers a sure refuge from the sordid side of life. The artist, he may reflect, is a gifted being for whom there is more richness in life than for ordinary mortals, a favourite of the gods, a confidant of Nature, intrusted by her with the delivery of cheering messages to the world and with the power to play on the strings of human emotion, so that he may arouse dormant impulses towards what is beautiful and true. How can the ordinary person, with uncultivated perceptions, and without special training, aspire to such a position? Perhaps, however, the matter is not so hopeless as it seems. Most of us have a love of Nature, and a sense of beauty, as well as some artistic appreciation, though this

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may be undeveloped. We need not aspire to the genius of a Rembrandt, but we may still hope to fulfil a modest duty by cultivating such gifts as we have so that we may give effect to our best impressions, and perhaps we may be rewarded by a glimpse of the Dream City now and then.

Nor does it follow that those who are trained in art are the only artists. There are many whom circumstances have driven to commerce, though they may have been born with all the natural equipment for a life of art. The question of training has been their stumbling-block. But they may to a great extent be relieved from anxiety on this point. Training is an assistance, not an essential. There have been many self-trained artists who have succeeded, and these have generally developed a degree of individuality that an art-school might have restrained. It should be remembered that the training of the schools is directed to the attainment of technical excellence rather than to the leading of the personal impulse in its own special direction. The photographer, however, need not go to school for technique; the handbooks, and his own experiments are quite sufficient for this purpose; he does not necessarily require to learn the elements of drawing, for the camera can be relied on to supply such forms as are requisite; neither is it essential that he should study the undraped model, or spend months in stippling a hand or a foot. An acquaintance with the laws of perspective is desirable, since the camera is not immaculate in this matter, but books on the subject are available, and, after all, it is not essential to go very deeply into its complications if the principles are understood. Indeed, a close

THE POETICAL ASPECT

study of this kind is not to be encouraged, since its tendency is towards the use of mechanical means rather than the exercise of observation and feeling.

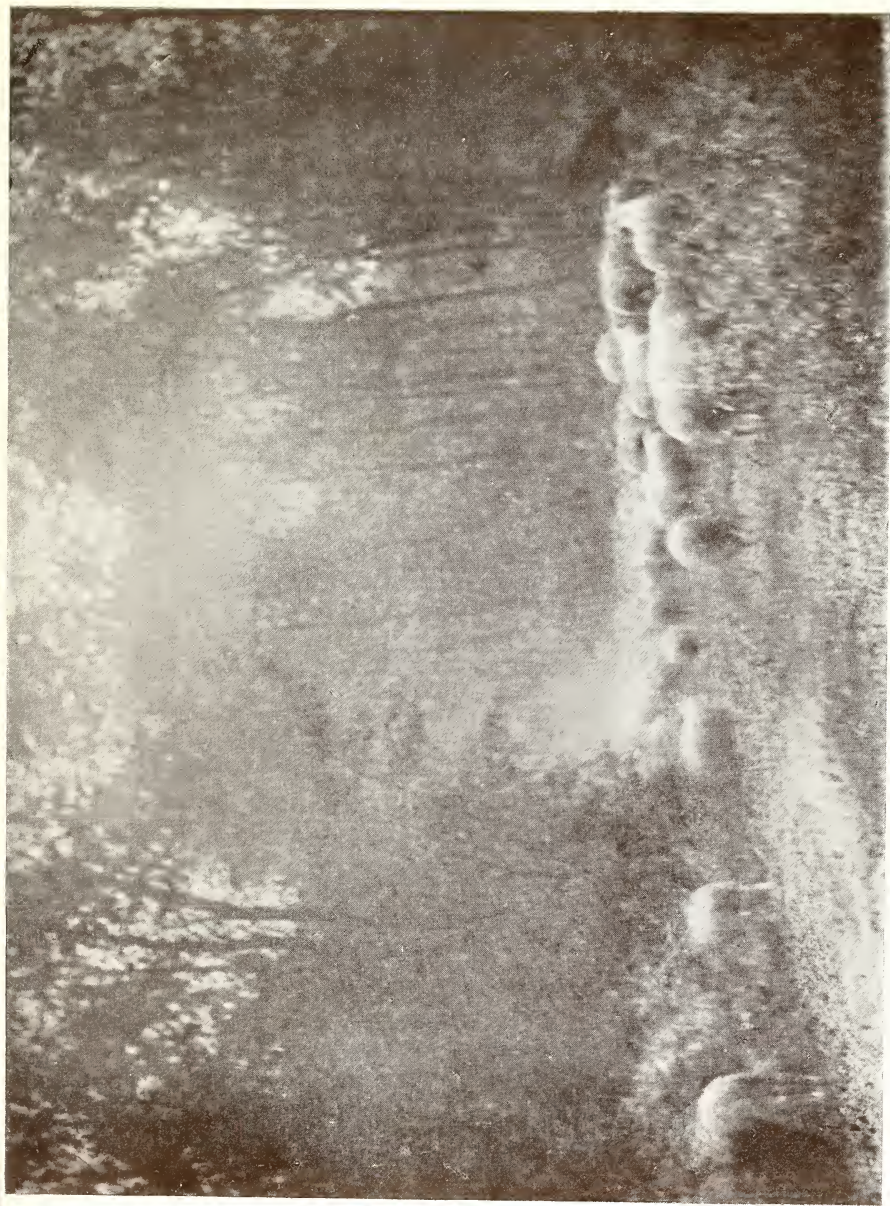
While there is no pressing need for the photographer to undertake such studies as ordinarily initiate an artistic career, it may be suggested that facility in drawing, the power to make rough sketches for composition, and for keeping in mind the impression that has to be rendered, cannot but be beneficial. Apart from this he starts with a very serviceable technical equipment, obtained without any laborious effort, and to the end that he may become an artist if only a modest one, he needs, in addition, a love of beauty, art, and Nature, combined with the habit of intelligent observation. Beauty must be absorbed before it can be set forth; hence it is necessary in the first place to learn to see, and afterwards to express what is seen with frankness, and also with a sense of decoration and order, which are very close allies. Through frankness of statement comes the play of individual temperament, and through decorative composition comes the pictorial quality.

THE POETICAL ASPECT

It will be recognized that the various illustrations have distinctive qualities, and the personal note will be very strongly felt throughout. I wish here to direct attention to the productions of Mr. Alexander Keighley, because he has made it his special province to show the possibility of render-

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ing the poetical aspect of a scene. His pictures afford striking proof that photography can render a rare refinement of perception and can be made responsive to a mood. The right spirit is felt in his pictures, and in examining them one cannot resist the poetic imagination that has beautified his outlook on Nature. One is impressed by the sentiment of the scenes rather than the material aspect. "A Picardy Pasture," for instance, is full of imaginative feeling, yet devoid of any detailed statement of facts. One feels, rather than identifies, a flock of sheep in a flood of light, and one is sensible of the sylvan beauty of the surroundings, though their particular characteristics remain undefined. It is like a dream-picture of a summer afternoon in some sequestered nook; and with all its indefiniteness it can stir the fancy so that one seems to be in the place itself. If there is little statement of detail a good deal of thought has been devoted to accuracy of tone, and to the management of simplicity and emphasis, which, though they always impart distinction and point to a work, often escape notice while admiration is given to minute elaboration. Through the simplified and suggestive tone we not only obtain atmosphere and distance, but effect is given to the admirably placed emphasis where the light comes in and gilds the sheep. It will be observed that the flock is treated as a mass, rather than as a collection of separate individuals, that a little dark foliage is noted with precision near the point of emphasis, and that the tone of the trees to the right passes from strength in the foreground to extreme delicacy in the distance. These are only a few of the particulars in which the picture offers



A PICARDY PASTURE

By ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY

REQUIREMENTS OF ART

an object lesson, and proves how subtly Mr. Keighley has adapted the photographic medium to an artistic purpose.

REQUIREMENTS OF ART

In the hands of an artist, then, photography may be an art. Employed by an unimaginative mechanician it can never be a creative art, though he may endow it with fine qualities of technique that properly come under the head of craftsmanship. Executive art, if it is worth anything at all, implies a certain amount of feeling communicated from the brain to the hand, not necessarily in respect of the executants' own conception, but, as in the case of the violinist, arising from the sympathetic understanding of the creations of another. In photography we have not much to do with the art of execution as distinguished from the art of creation, for the two become merged, except perhaps in the instance of reproducing pictures, which indeed is a very important function. It is, however, useful to mark the difference in order that those who aspire to the artistic use of photography may fully understand that in their landscapes, seascapes, and portraits they have a double duty to perform. They require the power to originate and the skill to execute, so that imagination and craftsmanship together may bring about the best results by the simplest means.

As to origination, it may be said briefly that it consists entirely in the influence of personal imagination on the subject rendered. It is the

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blending of a mood with a phase of Nature, a particular conception of a scene or individual, and it takes effect in the sentiment, composition, and general tone of a picture. In respect of execution, or treatment, one may safely be guided by the artistic principles, gradually evolved through the ages, and exemplified in modern art-work. To set forth the distinction in a simple way between the artistic and the inartistic in photography it may be said that the one is the representation of the sentiment of a scene, while the other merely illustrates the shapes of the separate objects that it embodies. This distinction may not carry us very far; but to make it is a necessary first step that leads away from mechanical imitation, and is directed towards the realms of imagination, the possibilities of individual expression, and all the riches of line and tone that combine to constitute pictorial art.

There are many who rely on fanciful arrangement, and the introduction of a pretty smoothness, which, however, is often fatal to expression. Others indulge in bolder flights, seeking to give their work an appearance of rugged strength by importing deep shadows and contrasting them with high lights, even calling Rembrandt as a witness in justification of their efforts. But such productions are not true to Nature, and even if they came near to being an imitation of Rembrandt (which they do not, for Rembrandt was a most subtle investigator of tone), they would still be inartistic, since art especially calls for the exercise of individual feeling, and has nothing to do with the copying of methods. The real reason, however, why such works are inartistic is that they are uninspired.

BEAUTY AND FITNESS

Inspiration is often thought of as something very wonderful, a divine afflatus, a compelling instinct of genius; but I do not intend the word to be understood in any such mysterious sense. It is a thing that comes to every one who has pictorial feeling, and is no more than the ardent desire to interpret beauty for its own sake, and conscientiously to record the appeal that it has made. In this way other eyes may be opened to the enjoyment of a similar influence.

If the subject is regarded coldly, if it makes no special appeal, and stirs no emotion, the picture will be a mere record, as mechanical as the professional portrait; but if the imagination has been aroused there is all the possibility of an artistic result. To achieve this it is necessary that the impression that has been received and the mood that has been induced should be so kept in view as to influence the preparation of the picture and to appear in the finished work.

BEAUTY AND FITNESS

The sense of beauty necessarily underlies the spirit of art, and doubtless gives the primary impulse to all who desire to record the sights that have impressed them. Like the sense of humour it seems to defy analysis. Both, undoubtedly, are closely bound up with temperament, are found in different people in varying degrees, and have the common faculty of inducing new emotions that take us out of the commonplace. Humour has been explained as an excita-

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tion of unaccustomed sensations, causing a flow of energy in new channels to the general awakening of joy. Beauty has been said to result from the gratification of a love of order, instilling a feeling of rightness. It has also been associated with a hereditary intimacy with Nature, the bequest of primeval man. The aspect of things had a significance for him that deeply affected his well-being, and could arouse elation and depression in his simple mind in a degree now scarcely to be realized. *Æsthetic* appreciation had no meaning for him, but his impressions went much deeper than this, for they were bound up with his life and its prospect of continuance. According to some theorists, it is when something of his sensitiveness recurs in us that we are most alive to the moods of Nature and our sense of beauty is most acute.

One would hesitate to express an opinion as to the value of such a theory, but it suggests a consideration that seems important. The sense of beauty in primeval man was at any rate unconscious. It was in reality no more than a sense of fitness—the fitness of his environment to him and of himself to his environment; and this entirely accords with the rational conception of beauty that has been adopted as a guiding principle of design in the art-crafts, namely, that beauty is fitness. This principle may very well be extended to pictorial art, though in this case fitness has something more than the practical meaning that appertains to it in applied art, and may be taken to signify the *æsthetic* appropriateness of everything included in the work.

In the art-crafts a thing is reckoned beautiful

BEAUTY AND FITNESS

because it is wanted, and has been fashioned simply and exactly to meet the purpose for which it is intended, with no ornamentation for the mere sake of ornament, but with due sense of design, and such adornment as may result spontaneously from the craftsman's pride in his work, and from the character of his material and tools.

Such qualities give charm to examples of the old handicrafts, and notably to ancient domestic architecture, whose fitness is often so apparent that old cottages and farm-houses seem to have grown up naturally as a part of and in harmony with their surroundings. This result is obtained unconsciously, and in a great measure through the use of local materials that are in natural accord with their environment.

It seems, indeed, that a conscious striving after beauty, when fitness is lost sight of, is apt to defeat its own object, and one of the reasons for this is that those who exercise premeditation are very liable to be tempted beyond the limits of their own inspiration. This is the way to affectation and to the kind of vulgarity that lies in the gaudy decoration of houses and garments. Beauty may be unconsciously attained by the cottager in his garden, for he aims at a pleasant floral surrounding rather than an æsthetic combination—and missed in his, or his wife's, conscious effort at display in the front parlour, which is only kept for show.

Yet the cottager who takes pride in his flowers is very often insensible to the charm of his natural surroundings, however picturesque. They are so familiar that they cannot interest him, and the visitor who feels the fascination of the scenery is often surprised at the indifference of the native.

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This might be taken to indicate that beauty, like humour, owes much of its effect to unexpectedness, arousing keen emotion at first, and palling with familiarity like a stale joke. There may be something in the idea, for one encounters many otherwise intelligent people who will scarcely turn round to look at a sunset—it is too common an occurrence to arouse general interest—and I remember the author of “Elizabeth and her German Garden” relating how her friends discussed the enthralling question of cooking while passing through a magnificent pine wood. Still it must be true that beautiful things tend to sharpen the perception, while ugliness dulls; for the one, in however small a degree, stimulates appreciative admiration, and attracts, while the other repels. To the real lover of beauty it is “a joy for ever,” but the truth is that the sense of beauty demands cultivation; it flourishes with care, but may sink to vanishing point if neglected or dulled through long association with ugliness. The unremitting cultivation of beauty by the Japanese may be noted by way of example.

In some degree the pursuit of photography must tend to foster the sense of beauty. It is not merely that the vision should be gratified by fine prospects and striking splendours; it is necessary to search for hidden beauty among the commonplaces of life, the subtleties of tone in gray streets, the character of unobtrusive shadows, the influence of a beam of light or a gleam of colour on dull surroundings, the softening effect of atmosphere, and the half-tones of twilight. All these things have a beauty of the less obvious kind, and its recognition will promote the refined sensitiveness to



SUNLIGHT ON WHITEWASH

BY A. H. BLAKE

BEAUTY AND FITNESS

delicate shades and harmonies that is the distinguishing mark of a cultivated sense of beauty, and is beyond the range of the undeveloped vision that can only be pleased by what is striking. Strong colours that hit the eye vigorously, violent contrasts, and surprising combinations, can influence every one. It is for the artist to discern the tender manifestations that do not shout to the ordinary passer-by, the combinations of line, the arrangements of light and tone, and the underlying sentiment that often give a dignity and interest to scarcely noticed objects and scenes.

Much of the elusive charm and delicacy of the play of sunlight and shadow is suggested by Mr. A. H. Blake's "Sunlight on Whitewash." The picture represents a homely spectacle, such as may often be found at the back of an old country house or cottage, and perhaps the very simplicity and familiarity of such a scene has blinded many to its charm. It is curious how we overlook the unobtrusive beauty that surrounds us until the artist points it out, but when once appreciated, it becomes a source of endless joy. An aspect such as this, however, is only of temporary duration, and one can imagine that the place might look quite ordinary, even gloomy, if the sun were not shining and throwing its lacework of shadows on the whitewashed wall. I do not wonder that the "bit" proved attractive. The tree itself, with the striking and decorative curves of its branches, is sufficiently beautiful, and it composes remarkably well with the windows in the background. But the real charm of the scene is due to the picture being a study of light rather than a portrait of a tree in a back garden. This is the direction that offers the picture-maker

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his best prospect of getting away from the commonplace, and of introducing some of the poetry of Nature into his work. Nature's daintiest handiwork is seen in the ethereal pulsating shadows that embellish a summer's day. If something of the intangible pattern and texture of these shadows in their due relation to the light that causes them, and is inseparable from them, can be captured, one may feel that one has got a little nearer to the spirit of Nature. This is surely doing something finer than to record the precise conformation of obvious things. The further one advances along the ways of art, the more one prefers the fleeting and mysterious things to the well-defined objects. A mere whitewashed wall is nothing, but enriched by a diaper of sunlight and shadow it becomes a delight. This is what Mr. Blake has shown, and those who examine his picture carefully may gain some suggestion as to the delicate perception of tone that is necessary to the production of such an effect.

HOW TO OBSERVE

With the cultivation of the sense of beauty naturally comes the practice of observation, and this, if pursued with perseverance at first, will grow into an unconscious habit that will create a continually increasing store of knowledge, and at the same time refine the perceptions. But in the first place it is necessary to understand what observation means. It is something more than seeing; it is more also than seeing and remembering; even seeing and understanding does not quite hit the

HOW TO OBSERVE

mark; it is seeing and understanding in relation to a special purpose. Thus the sportsman and naturalist are necessarily men of habitual observation, but what they note is entirely with a view to the business in hand, and would be of no use to the art-worker. Similarly those who observe for pictorial purposes need not trouble about matters that might be of value in the pursuit of other interests. If an entomologist and an artist went together into the woods and both followed their own bent, it would be impossible that they could both see the same things. Where one recognized a beetle the other would only notice a quivering shadow; where one discovered a rare moth, the other would only discern a playful effect of light and colour. A concentration of interest is essential.

The observer needs not only to know what to look for; he has to learn how to see. It is not enough to search for beautiful combinations; there are so many of them in the fields, the woods, by the riverside, and even in the streets, that they would simply bewilder by their abundance if regarded merely as a succession of pictures, and one would in that case derive no more benefit from one's walks abroad than from a hasty visit to the Royal Academy. It is therefore necessary, besides looking for beautiful things, to seek the essential principle that makes them beautiful. So we arrive at intelligent observation, as distinguished from the mere gratification of the sense of sight. Any one can go to the riverside and admire the sparkle of the water, the reflections of trees and sky, the distant landscape, and the wild flowers on the banks; but the artist wants to know why these things in combination produce so delightful an impression.

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He will therefore note the influence of light and atmosphere; he will recognize the leading motive of the composition, and he will study the accents and masses, and the arrangements of line. And, perhaps most important of all, he will have schooled himself to see the scene as a whole. This in fact is the touchstone of artistic, as compared with in-artistic, observation. The untrained eye will inevitably see the scene in a succession of details, and will be attracted by each object separately; while the trained eye will take in the whole effect, regarding it as one pattern to which the details are incidental, selecting from them such as are needful for a pictorial design, and being scarcely conscious of the others. So he will make the scene "compose" by appreciating at their proper value its different factors in their relation to each other and to the whole. Especially necessary is it that they should be reckoned with in terms of light. In outdoor scenes everything reflects light, even the shadows are influenced by the sky and by other reflected lights. But these are all modified by a pervading atmosphere, which is the creator of tone. It is through such concentrative observation that the sentiment of a scene is to be grasped.

THE MEANS AND THE END

To get at the spirit, the pervading influence, the expression of a subject, and at the same time to show frankly and to the best advantage the medium employed, so that the appeal may be ingratiating in its manner as well as impressive in its matter,

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is a primary object of pictorial art. If we consider the special attributes of photography we find that these requirements culminate at one particular point. Light is the medium, and is inevitably a pervading element of the subject depicted. Whatever the artist's intention, however he may concern himself with the character of the forms that he sees, the picture must be first of all a picture of light, portrayed by light. Not the substance of things, nor even of their shapes, but the lights that they reflect are revealed.

Objects have no interest for the camera for their own sake, it takes no account of characteristics; a prospect extending to illimitable distance might all be on a flat upright plane for all the instrument cares, it does not trouble itself whether things are alive or inanimate; it only concerns itself with reflections of light. These, according to their particular shapes and degrees of intensity, are what it records. It is the artist who feels the sentiment of the scene—the instrument is impervious to such influences—and he, in preparing his picture, will bring in the personal note, imparting a human interest. The camera is not only indiscriminate, but also very often inaccurate in its dealings with subtle shades of tone, and particularly so in regard to the values of colour. As everything has colour the importance of checking and amending the mechanical record must be very apparent. In fact artistic photography may be summed up as the correction of the mistakes of the camera, and the vivifying of its productions by human emotion. Photography, though it has its basis in light, is not entirely trustworthy in illustrating it, and this task, therefore, demands special attention.

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Most amateurs are careful enough to study the quality of light in taking a picture, and it remains for them to be no less discriminating in completing it as an artistic production, remembering that forms are distinguished by means of the lights that they reflect, and that these are photographed, not the forms. If this is a truism, its truth is by no means generally realized; indeed, the average photographer would probably experience a momentary surprise when, having taken a lady's portrait, he was told that he had not photographed the lady but only the light reflected from her. But when the fact is taken to heart it seems to import a fresh significance into the work. The exact representation of objects can no longer be regarded as of chief importance, but must give place to the consideration of the lights and shades that envelop them, so that before any other qualities are taken into account there may be the certainty of correct illumination.

This attained, there becomes available a trustworthy basis for the artistic treatment of the picture; but if the record of light is erroneous, whatever fancy, sentiment or decorative quality may be built into it afterwards, there will always be a fundamental defect that will weaken the whole structure.

It is somewhat difficult, as I know by experience, to induce photographers, especially those who have given no special study to artistic principles, to recognize the supreme importance of this matter, for they are generally absorbed by the desire to reproduce scenes and objects, and in trying to go straight to this goal they are liable to overlook that the nearest way is through light, and not in disregard



THE APPLE-ROOM

By A. H. BLAKE

THE MEANS AND THE END

of it. Picture this correctly, and the accurate portrayal of the subject follows inevitably.

An apt example is provided by Mr. Blake in "The Apple-room," a very delicate composition, the figure tenderly suggested with a gentle accent on the head, giving point to the whole work. In the luminous atmosphere of the picture the figure is almost fairy-like. Yet one sees that she is real enough, and singularly natural in her "movement." She may possibly disappoint those whose ideal is clear definition, but they should remember that a strong light masks definition, for the reason that the eyes are more sensitive to light than to form. If one suddenly goes from a shadowed place into brilliant sunlight, quite an appreciable time must pass before the eyes can so accommodate themselves to the change as to be able to distinguish the shapes of objects comfortably. Details are seen with the greatest accuracy in diffused daylight. Other kinds of illumination are too uncertain, too strong, or too weak. Some may argue that it is the function of light to define, and that if there is strong light there must be strong definition. But brilliance dazzles and shadows conceal. Much radiance draws attention away from details to the light itself. Sunshine bewilders by its sparkle and its lively play of varied shade, and is, in fact, an obstacle to the apprehension of small contours. It would, therefore, be incorrect to show a figure in brilliant sunshine as definitely as it would appear in the average conditions to which the eye has learnt best to accommodate itself.

The fact that photography is the portrayal of light by means of light should influence the photo-

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grapher throughout his work, and if he bears this in mind he will always be in harmony with the spirit of his medium, a very important matter in all artistic production. He will be induced to study and to give expression to the essential quality before dealing with form and character, and he will find that these lose nothing, but rather gain, through the correctness of values.

In this way distinction is imparted. Whether in its broad masses, in its sparkling reflections, or in its more delicate aspects, the quality of luminosity is not only beautiful and effective on its own account, but it conveys a verisimilitude to Nature; for light is the medium whereby she depicts all visible things with varying degrees of accentuation, softness, and suggestion. Through this transfiguring medium objects do not manifest themselves with crude insistence, but are endowed with an additional beauty due to their being in harmonious association with the tone of the picture as a whole.

Mr. Clausen said lately in one of his Academy lectures: "The development of painting has been a gradual progress towards the knowledge of light, and how things are revealed by it." Such, in fact, is the main tendency of modern art, and while the painter pursues this quest, the photographer has even more reason to do so, for it leads him to the source of all that he can achieve.

"Chardin," says Mr. Clausen, "gives us a loaf of bread, a bottle, glass and knife, so finely seen, or rather the beauty of their appearance as expressed by light is so finely shown, that the little picture outweighs many of far greater pretension."

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This sentence is worth noting, for it serves as a reminder that magnificent views and handsome models are not indispensable to beauty ; but natural illumination is always charming, even when it falls on commonplace things, and if we portray it instead of imitating the objects, we not only capture the essential element of beauty, but we confer on matters, insignificant in themselves, a refinement and an enrichment that they could not otherwise obtain. Here, indeed, is the secret of the beauty of the commonplace. To quote Mr. Clausen again : " Light seems to me the governing thing as far as the painter is concerned ; it redeems anything that is capable of redemption."

So it follows that one need not go far for exquisite subjects, for the main source of beauty is everywhere. Only we must interest ourselves in the way in which things are refined by light before we consider their character. It is thus that we find the key to atmosphere, form, and colour. This then is the first consideration, and one that should not be disregarded, as is not uncommonly done by insisting on matters of intellectual interest, and dealing with illumination as merely incidental. Likeness, dramatic suggestion, and poetry are to be obtained through light ; otherwise we get stagey artificiality. Before the perception of form comes the perception of light itself. Thus in the most elementary organs of vision, form and colour are not defined ; and the first impression that the human eye receives before it exercises the power of differentiation, is the general impression of light and shade.

So it should be with a picture. Art is always safe while it works in harmony with Nature, and

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Nature unmistakably insists on the primary importance of light, firstly, as a mere illumination, secondly, as a means of distinguishing form and colour. The artist should consider light in the same order of significance, and it follows that before a picture is a representation of objects it must be an arrangement of light and shade, its basis being a design in masses, a mere pattern that will give a pleasing first impression to the beholder.

One may look around and see the play of light on a furnished room, and not one of the objects—chairs, tables, ornaments, lamps, glass, china—is clearly defined. High-lights and shadows obliterate the outlines and merge them with their surroundings, and unless one stares fixedly at a particular object, to the exclusion of all else, it is only possible to see dashes of light, colour, and shadow, whose forms, though indefinite, are sufficient to suggest what they really are. If every object is separately and carefully copied, the result, however clever, cannot be artistic, because it is not true. The student of art is not concerned with things as they are, but only as they look to him.

The light that falls on things suggests their character, sometimes forcibly and unmistakably, sometimes with the indefiniteness and mystery that constitute a charm, by arousing wonder and speculation.

It might be objected that it comes to the same thing whether we represent the objects themselves or the light that falls on them, since nothing that we see can be dissociated from light, and, this is all that is reflected to our eyes from the objects we gaze at. There is, however, the difference of sentiment and intention. In the one case we get

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an uncompromising representation of the construction of small things; in the other we have a regard for the greatest fact, which must necessarily take precedence of all that comes under its domination. It is the essence of the scene, and that is one reason why it is the first concern of pictorial art. In photography it is the means and the end.

It is necessary to think not only of the illumination as a means of definition, but also of its decorative function, and its aid in insisting on the paramount interest of the leading subject of the theme, and this insistence one will wish to carry out with graceful urbanity rather than by glaring advertisement, remembering, too, that if the most brilliant accent is employed on a matter of secondary significance, this immediately assumes an importance that is more than its due.

Natural light is distributed without any such forethought, and it is in supplying the selectiveness and economical treatment omitted by Nature that art has its mission and the feeling of the artist finds expression.

Not only the high-lights, but also the more subtle shades are full of meaning, and express the fundamental conditions of a scene—diffused daylight, with no strongly-marked contrasts of light and shade; moonlight, with delicate contrasts; the degree of intensity in sunlight, recognized by the comparative strength of its shadows, the full sunlight of midsummer, with well marked shadows, always, however, transparent and modified by the reflection of the sky; the weaker sunlight of winter with slight shadows very refined in quality. The strongest shadows are those produced indoors by artificial light, for there is no sky to reflect light

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into them and subdue their density. So light will express the season, and often the time of day; but it also has a sentimental expressiveness. The sparkle of sunshine gives gaiety to a theme, subdued lights suggest thoughtfulness and repose, and low tones may tend to melancholy, or may help to promote a feeling of awe. Evidently, therefore, the artist has great possibilities of strengthening his message by the discriminating use of light.

STUDY OF VALUES

For the realization of light the study of values is absolutely necessary, and the amateur may regard this as the most important item in his education. Fortunately it can be explained in a few words. Every picture has its highest light and its darkest shadow. It is necessary to identify these and to note, also, in their proper order, the relative brightness or density of as many as possible of the less intense lights and shadows. In this way all lights and shadows may be depicted in their due relationship. The severe logic of light and shade more than anything else imparts strength and reality to a picture. If the camera makes mistakes, the photographer can easily correct them when he has noted his values.

While the painter begins his work with nothing recorded, and selects what is necessary to a pictorial result, the process is reversed in photography, where too much is recorded, and some of it incorrectly, so that the photographer has to eliminate the unnecessary, and to rectify inac-

STUDY OF VALUES

curacies. The different routes lead to the same goal, and, if the methods differ, the principles are alike.

The painter makes sure of his effect, and afterwards sets down such details as are wanted; the photographer gets a record of detail to which the effect has to be given in the development and printing. By the effect is meant the arrangement of light, tone, and emphasis. These cannot be fixed by the photographer as the preliminary, or rather fundamental, structure, but if he is receptive to their influence he cannot fail to express them. It will, however, be well to assist the memory by a note on paper—either a sketch or merely writing—and it will be sufficient in most cases to mark the highest light 1, and the darkest shadow 10, afterwards indicating the intermediate lights and shadows according to their degree. A correct scale of ten values gives wonderful truth and vitality to a picture, and is enough for a beginner to undertake, especially in a small picture; but in more ambitious work the subtler differences may be noted, and the scale extended to any extent. Though this operation is mechanical, some artistic faculty is necessary to the perception of the play, direction, and massing of light, and the definition or simplification of shadows. There is the play of shadow as well as of light, and it will generally be found that a shadow is darker in one part than another.

It is not always easy to distinguish between the relative values of lights or of shadows on account of the disturbing influence of local colour. A daffodil in the shade will sing so gaily as almost to persuade you that it is lighter than the sunfleck

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near by; but it will not deceive the colourist, who knows that he has to look for the broad incidence of sunlight and shadow, and that he must not be diverted by minor temptations. Though local colour begins as an obstacle to the student, it afterwards becomes his strong ally, his work gaining quality and distinction through the successful management of the difficulty.

Especially in landscape-work the most important consideration is the source, character, and direction of light. If the sun is shining the fact will dominate the whole picture. Whatever best reflects the direct rays will give the highest light, and in the search for values it may be helpful to remember that planes opposing the direct line of light reflect it better than those on which it falls obliquely, and that smooth surfaces reflect better than rough ones. In full sunlight the highest light is not to be sought in the sky, for the brilliance of white clouds is subdued by atmosphere, and they are too far away to compete with a strong high light in the foreground. A blue sky is not a good reflector, and must be several shades darker than those parts of the landscape on which the sunlight falls. As to shadows, their intensity depends on the degree in which they reflect the sky. A shadow under cover, and thus shielded from the sky, is the darkest of shadows. Shadows cast by twigs at the edge of a tree-top will be among the lightest of shadows. The shadow of a tree, or of any other object, will be darkest at the base of the object itself.

When the sun itself is not visible, daylight is so diffused that, though one part of the sky may be brighter than the rest, there are scarcely any

STUDY OF VALUES

cast shadows, except where the influence of the sky is shut out and its light cannot be reflected. Values are more difficult to find in gray weather than in sunlight. As a rule the sky is the lightest part of the picture, but this may not be so, for a white house facing the lightest part of the sky will of course be lighter than the sky behind the building. But a white house seen against a light sky will become darker than the sky. Local colour is felt more than in sunlight, a yellow path being a bright object beside a green lawn, though if the sun were shining gravel and grass would more nearly approach the same value, for local colour abdicates its power in the commanding presence of the sun.

Fortunately the study of values can be taken up at any moment, for one who goes about observantly has the subject always before him, and when he takes his walks abroad may note the essential differences of light and shade that continually present themselves. The shimmer of the puddles in a road may be usefully observed in comparison with the sky, and by looking down a street and marking the gradations of values in houses and traffic, something may be added to the artistic equipment. It will not be forgotten that the highest light and the darkest shadow are the points to look for first, and if it is not easy to find them, doubts may often be resolved by half closing the eyes so that the effect may be seen broadly.

The consideration of values is essential to the orderly and accurate statement of facts, but this is only a stepping-stone to the statement of ideas, which are the outcome of arranged and digested truths. These are the materials that have to be

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fashioned by imagination, which is the vitalizing spirit of art. Facts alone are the dry skeleton, but they have to be stated correctly, otherwise they cease to be facts, and if they are not effectively stated, they fail to carry weight.

AERIAL PERSPECTIVE

Though demanding some acuteness of perception, the study of values is, after all, a simple matter, and scarcely less so is aerial perspective which conveys the quality of atmosphere, and suggests the distance that separates objects as they recede from the eye. Just as the perspective of line means the gradual widening out of lines as they advance from the point of sight, so aerial perspective signifies the gradual strengthening of tone from the distance to the foreground. It is simply that the nearer things are, the more forcibly they present themselves to the eye, and, the further away, the more indistinct they become. Aerial perspective gives an underlying sense of this gradation, influencing dark objects in any part of the picture so that they become less dark, and light objects so that they become less light, than they would be if they were in the foreground. Suppose for instance that there are two horses, black and white, in the middle distance, and two similar animals in the immediate foreground. The atmosphere between the spectator and the more distant horses will cause them to look gray by comparison with those nearer; the white, as seen through the veil, will seem less pure, and the black will have



AERIAL PERSPECTIVE

less density. The nearer animals, not being under such softening influence, will be in much stronger contrast with each other. When there is an object in the foreground to compare with a similar object in the distance, it is comparatively easy to place them in aerial perspective, but some discrimination would be necessary to arrive at the correct tones of the distant horses if there were no near ones with which to make the comparison. A good test of correctness in this matter is to imagine how things away from the foreground would look if they were near at hand, and to see that the difference of tone is sufficient to represent the intervening atmosphere, and thus to suggest the distance. Mr. Walter Benington provides an excellent example of aerial perspective in the graduated tones of the distant hills in "Coniston Old Man."

The perspective of atmosphere includes definition, as well as tone, softening lines, simplifying details, and bringing them together in masses, which grow more delicate, and have less precision of statement the further they recede from the eye, but always retain the quality of suggestion, which, indeed, is more valuable than cataloguing in every part of the work. Suggestiveness is an attribute particularly to be sought through aerial perspective. It is remarkable, by the way, that many who will notice a fault in linear perspective at a glance, will altogether overlook an error in aerial perspective, though it is a no less serious defect.

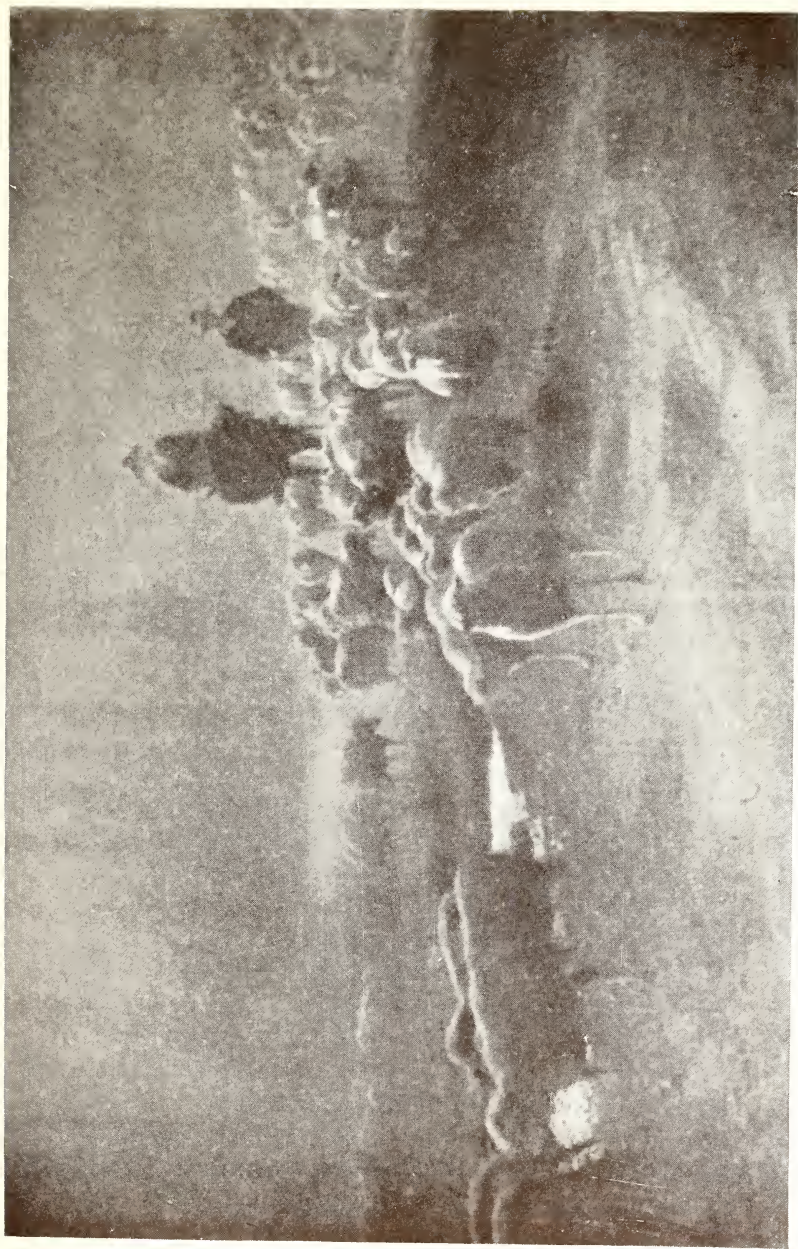
When values and aerial perspective are understood the artistic aspirant has trustworthy material for his imagination to work upon.

ART AND THE CAMERA

IMAGINATION

The call of imagination is not to be mistaken; it is either stimulated by the scene selected for portrayal or it is not, and if it is not, one may as well, so far as the prospect of an artistic result is concerned, pass on "to fresh woods and pastures new." Imagination is of various kinds, but the most potent that is called forth by landscape may be described as a sense of oneness with Nature in the scene under observation. Every artist must be familiar with this sensation, and the more highly his perceptive faculties are cultivated, the oftener will he experience it. It is as if Nature is speaking to him, and he understands and responds; and when so intimate a relationship is set up he may hope to be intrusted with some beautiful message, and may set about the task of interpreting it with confidence. But in the interpretation he will express himself—not consciously, but inevitably—and here we get a glimpse of that other kind of imagination that gives a personal character to the work, and enforces the dictum that art is Nature seen through a temperament. If the impression that stirred the observer can be retained, the play of imagination will be felt in the finished picture.

To remember and convey the original impression is of the greatest importance, for it is this that makes the picture interesting by preserving the imaginative quality. Once obliterated, there is no substitute, and any playful fancy subsequently evolved as a makeshift can only be trivial, even if it is not absurd affectation. The element of imagina-



THE MOVING FLOCK

BY ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY

IMAGINATION

tion called into being by the first impression is the one thing that can give the work vitality, and therefore it will be well to let this impression, with all its emphasis and selection, sink deeply into the mind so that it can be remembered vividly.

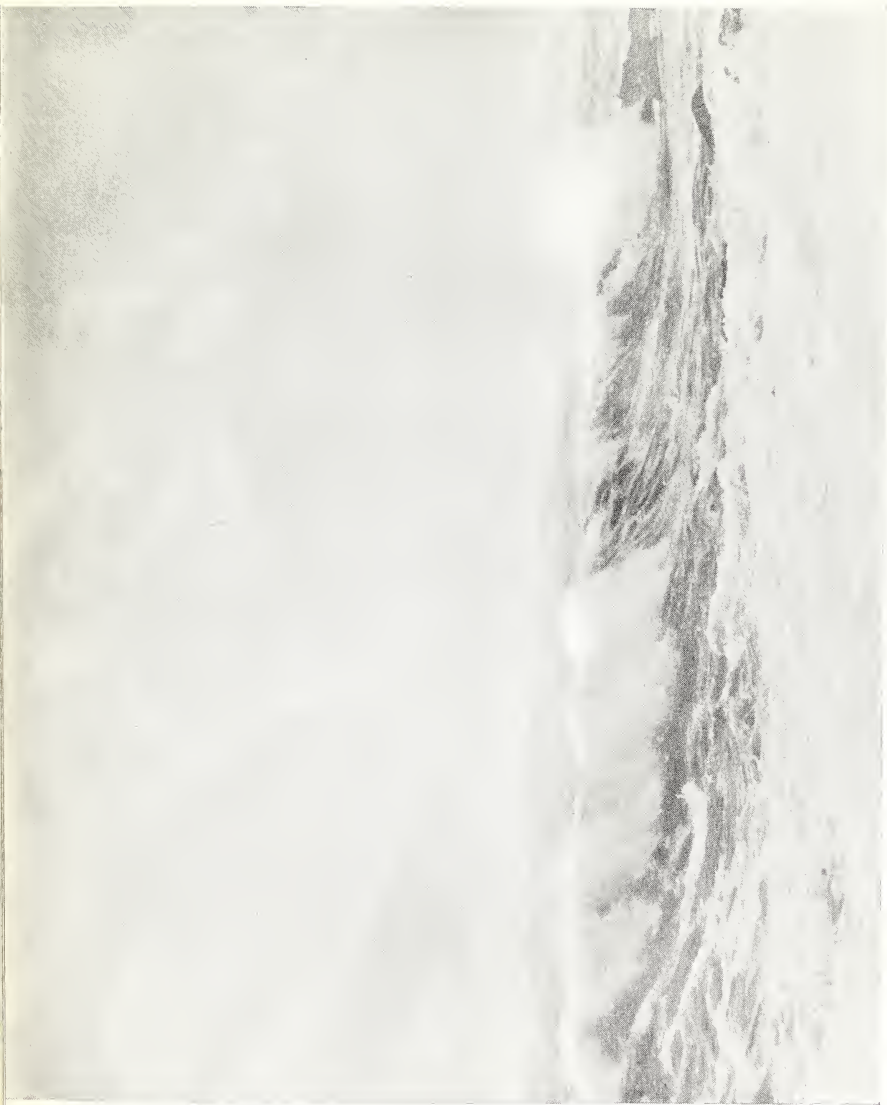
There is a representation of sheep, "The Moving Flock," by Mr. Alexander Keighley, that has the peculiar quality of appealing direct to the imagination. What is this strange faculty that seems to go outside everyday experience, and to be allied in some mysterious way to the spiritual side of life? Firstly, as it seems to me, there is no attempt to illustrate the ordinary aspect of things—that is to say, the aspect that presents itself to the untrained eye. Mr. Keighley approaches his subjects with a refined and artistic vision, which rejects superficial and comparatively unimportant facts, and seeks those deeper ones that reveal some mood of Nature, and arouse his own consciousness to the point of emotion. Hence, in this work, it may be taken for granted that the motive is not a mere study of sheep. It is rather a picture of light and atmosphere, and of the manner in which they exhibit the flock. Yet the animals have "movement" and expression, one feels, indeed, that they are on the march; this sense of progression, however, would have been lost if their shapes had been separately depicted in an uncompromising way, for it must be remembered that the appearance of objects loses its definiteness when they are moving. It is important to observe how the sheep become still more indefinite as they get away from the point of emphasis. Attention should also be directed to the tone of the figures, which places them in aerial perspective, so that they take their proper place

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in the picture. The truth of the illumination by the setting sun, and of the atmospheric effect of the picture is so evident that it would be superfluous to comment on it further.

MOVING OBJECTS

But probably in the lesson that is to be derived from this picture there is nothing more important than its exemplification of the treatment of moving objects. The camera records only the instant of exposure; the human eye is aware of the moment before and the moment after, and combines them in one impression. It is the difference between the eye in co-operation with the mind, and the eye momentarily opened and uninfluenced by imagination or experience. But the difference does not end here, for the angles of vision from the two human eyes give a more comprehensive view than that obtained by the camera. In snapshots of galloping horses the positions of the limbs, though quite accurately reproduced, seem distorted to the human vision, which has had no experience that can enable it to recognize them as examples of natural movement. Such photographs must inevitably be inartistic, for they cannot by any possibility be records of individual impression. In fact, it is a primary duty of the artistic photographer to get away from the unintelligent single eye, and to bring his work into accord with human vision. Anything that the human eye cannot perceive—and that without a strain—is out of place in pictorial work.



A WIND SEA

By F. J. MORTIMER, F.R.P.S.

MOVING OBJECTS

This principle extends to many things. There are the swaying of leaves and branches in the breeze, the shimmer of ripples, the swirl of drapery, and the changes of facial expression. All these need to be represented with a thought of the moment before and the moment after, for if only the single instant is fixed the result becomes lifeless and mechanical, and we get wooden faces, cast iron trees, and stuffed animals. So, moving objects should not be defined with precision, much less with hard outline, mainly because they cannot be seen precisely, and also because such striving after exactitude is destructive of movement, and produces the sensation of arrested motion. Not that photographers are the only offenders in this matter, though their conditions are such as to render them particularly liable to err. I remember a picture of charging cavalry by a distinguished painter, in which all the accoutrements of the men, even their buttons, were accurately portrayed. It was an admirable illustration of military details; but where was the impetuous rush of the squadron, which must have passed in a flash, and have given no opportunity for minute observation? The movement, not the detailed appearances, should be sought, and this is what makes the study of the sea so difficult. It is continually moving and changing, and the forms that it assumes, even when only slightly agitated, cannot be precisely observed, for they last but a moment.

ART AND THE CAMERA

THE SEA

Many photographers have been attracted by the sea but none has given it more devoted attention or has been rewarded with more success than Mr. F. J. Mortimer, of whose work I am able to offer three examples. Such a pursuit is not without its hardships, and even its dangers, and unless the zealous explorer is, like Mr. Mortimer himself, prepared to wade out to slippery rocks, to undergo a drenching while setting up his camera in stormy weather, to risk the instrument being washed away, and altogether to disregard climatic conditions in his search for the right effect at the right moment, there is little chance for him to get at the full romance of the subject. Of course there are compensations, and one may imagine Mr. Mortimer's boat gliding over the smooth surface of the water on the summer day when he got his "Peace."

It is wonderful how bright the sails of a yacht will look in full sunlight. They seem to reflect all the pervading light, not only of the sun, but of the sea also, and absolutely to sparkle. Yet such brilliance is not without its danger to the amateur who is not experienced in such matters. He has a stretch of sea, perhaps two or three hundred yards, between himself and the sail, and the difficulty is, while retaining its brilliance, also to keep it in its right place in aerial perspective. If the sail is too brilliant it will come forward, and the result of this will be that the intervening water will look as if it were on a vertical, instead of a horizontal, plane.



PEACE

BY F. J. MORTIMER

THE SEA

The best way to escape the difficulty is that which Mr. Mortimer has adopted; the avoidance of strong contrasts. He has made his sky very delicate so that there is no more difference between its tone and that of the sail than is absolutely necessary, for the greater the contrast the less atmospheric the sail would look. The sea also is very light, and the luminous quality that belongs to it when the sun is shining has been carefully preserved. Moreover, the hull of the vessel has been kept in a simple quiet tone which gives evidence of a good deal of observation and judgement. If there had been any strong accent here all the harmony of the scheme would have been destroyed. The softness of the horizon line helps to give distance, and there is some very delicate modelling in the near water which brings it forward without interfering with the emphasis that is thrown on the yawl. The softness, yet sufficiency of the reflection is another good feature, and the picture, simple as it appears, affords a notable instance of the skilful treatment of a difficult subject.

The grandeur of the ocean in its continually changing aspects is very absorbing to the student, and, if he is once ensnared by the fascination of the sea, he must ever be its slave; he can never be its master, for if he succeed in understanding it in one of its moods, it has always a thousand others to present for his perpetual bewilderment. There are principles, however, that may keep him from straying wide of the mark, and in illustration of one of these I may mention the laconic comment of Mr. Whistler on a seascape by an eminent painter at the Royal Academy. Mr. Whistler's sole word was "Tin!" and brief as that word is,

ART AND THE CAMERA

it is full of suggestion as to what one who essays to interpret the sea should avoid. The hard, metallic quality that it implies is not infrequent in photographs, but no one is likely to discover it in Mr. Mortimer's examples.

One often finds that liquidity and transparency are missed through the presence of heavy shadow tones that give a feeling of solidity to the water, and also by hardness of outline in the waves. The certainty of definition that the camera furnishes is a thing to be distrusted, since it tends permanently to fix a momentary position. Thus simplicity is very needful in the treatment of the sea, and also delicacy of tone, notably when waves break over rocks, for being wet the rocks must reflect a certain amount of light, and, however dark their local colour, it must be subdued by an atmosphere charged with spray. Delicacy is also very necessary in the shadow-sides of waves, for it is here that one finds the transparency and local colour of the water rather than in the bright places, where the eye is prevented by reflected light from penetrating the surface.

Probably, however, there is no quality more valuable than movement, and this is very forcibly suggested by Mr. Mortimer in "Abandon," where the vigorous thrust of the line and swirl of the water and rush of foam impart a great deal of life to the picture. The reserved tone of the surf is a point well worth considering. Foam is not necessarily white, though there is a rather common tendency to make it so. It presents a broken surface which cannot reflect all the light that it receives, and quite correctly in the present case it is kept in subjection to the high light in the sky.



ABANDON

BY F. J. MORTIMER

THE SEA

In Mr. Mortimer's other picture, "A Wind Sea," he gives a very pleasing and vivacious suggestion of a wave; the picture is full of "go," and has a fine, windy sky, that is thoroughly in keeping with the theme, and by its graduated tone conveys a sense of distance. The lightness of the foam in this case is explained by a light in the sky outside the picture to the left, but one feels that the clouds are driving up rapidly and that what brightness remains will have but a brief existence.

A pleasant contrast to these two works is formed by the placid surface of the water and soft summer haze sympathetically illustrated in Mr. Benington's "A Little Ship."

I am convinced that those who attempt the representation of the sea will find great assistance in the careful study of aerial perspective, and that in another direction—and this perhaps is a matter of more difficulty—the observation of the essential planes, they will find no less aid. It may be worth while to make this clear. The most important plane of the sea is the general flat plane from the eye to the horizon. This must underlie all superficial variations in the waters, and one cannot afford to leave it out of consideration. Next in importance are the planes of the great undulations—the swell and the waves. These are essential to structure, for even the ocean must have construction, though it may not be so obvious as in architecture. The least important planes are those that appear on the surface—the ripples and wavelets that may or may not diversify the big masses of water. Yet how often do we see these little details emphasized while the bigger movements are not expressed.

The undulations, it may be pointed out, are

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marked by the broad incidence of light, the horizontal planes usually reflecting more light than the inclined planes.

FACT AND FANCY

We may return for a moment to the subject of imagination, which, in its widest sense, is a permeating influence that animates pictorial work throughout, governing the whole arrangement and giving it expressiveness. In portraiture it constitutes the penetrating vision that apprehends and presents character. In regard to the particular application of the term, however, it may be useful to refer to the dressing of fact with fancy, the building up of pictures from various sources in order to construct an imagined scene—the remoulding “nearer to the heart’s desire.” The combination of negatives taken at different times is a dangerous expedient, except in the hands of the very experienced; but it offers great scope for imaginative treatment, and many famous painters have adopted the plan of combining different scenes. Only the artist who has a large fund of observation to draw on, and is thoroughly conversant with Nature, can hope to accomplish such work. It demands a poetic invention that can create for itself a scene that is truthful, not because it is like any particular manifestation of Nature, but that it embodies and reconstructs such essential facts as Nature herself might combine. So it may, at its best, adapt the essence of Nature to the fullest requirements of art; but the diffi-

A LITTLE SHIP

BY WALTER BENINGTON



FACT AND FANCY

culties are enough to deter all but the boldest. The imagination is called on to depict the bits taken separately from Nature as they would all appear in one aspect, with the many modifications of light that would be necessary to bring the details into unity, and there comes a pressing need for fact to strengthen the imagination. Alone it is useless; precise representation alone is useless, but fancy may give value to fact and fact to fancy.

The artist may, however, let his imagination stray away from fact within such limits as are needful to give scope to selection, emphasis, simplification, and decorative composition, and in this way he will bring his individuality into play. If he only adorns his facts and does not misstate them, the greater is his honour. Indeed, the imagination need only be bounded by a reverence for Nature and a regard for artistic considerations, so long as it confines itself to things that may be appreciated solely through the sense of sight. But drama is another matter, and it is well to distinguish between the kind of imagination that is essential to graphic art and that which imports something into it not absolutely necessary to its existence. When one sees a so-called imaginative work, one is sometimes inclined to reflect that the imagination is not that of the artist, but of the dramatist or story-teller. Each has his own kingdom, and, though there may be some give and take between them, it is useful to beat the boundaries now and then.

Pictorial fancy produces idealism at one end of the scale and realism at the other. In the one, imagination preponderates over fact, and in the

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other, fact preponderates over imagination. The artist who makes the widest appeal will surely be he who finds a happy middle course and holds the balance, so that actuality will not be neglected, but will be beautified by imagination.

The scales have been held very justly in the pretty composition, "Clover," by Mr. J. Cruwys Richards, which seems to hint at the charming personality of the subject; but the extreme refinement of the work is perhaps not so evident in the reproduction as in the original print. Attention may be specially drawn to the deft indication of the figure, merely by a line and a tone, the line merely the suggestion of a spray, to carry out the sentiment of the flowers in the hair, and the tone only a thought lighter than the background, yet sufficient to mark a difference without in the least interfering with the emphasis that is thrown on the head. The whole design is most dainty, and quite complete.

FIGURE SUBJECTS AND GENRE WORK

Figure subjects of daily life, the study of what is quaint, picturesque, typical, or moving in humanity, the kind of picture-making known as genre work, offers abundant opportunities. It is only necessary to warn aspirants against a tendency to overdo the dramatic side of this kind of composition. Violent action and the telling of stories are perilous. In the one case there is the pitfall of arrested motion, and in the other there is the



GRACE BEFORE MEAT

BY ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY

FIGURE SUBJECTS, ETC.

“literary” danger—that of trenching on the novelist’s province to the neglect of the purely pictorial function. It will be well to bear in mind the simple yet superlatively expressive illustrations of peasant life by Jean François Millet. These convey all the typical character, employment, and sentiment of his subjects with extraordinary force, yet solely by the means that come legitimately within the scope of the artist.

Imagination, sympathy, and the appreciation of light are distinctive qualities of Mr. Keighley’s work, whatever the subject, and are to be recognized in his “Grace before Meat,” a picture of much simplicity, the figure being broadly suggested while most of the details are lost in shadow, yet so expressive as to prompt the exclamation: “What a modest meal, and what a simple, heartfelt prayer!” The sunshine glorifies this homely scene, wherein one feels that with all the indications of poverty, misery has no place. The sentiment seems to emerge spontaneously from the big, bold treatment that has been given to the subject, but sentiment is valueless, unless, as here, it is bound up with the artistic conception. There is the striking contrast of the brilliant sunlight and the deep shadow, and if these were not correctly rendered as a natural setting for the figure no feeling could be evoked. It is only the touch of Nature that can make the sentiment real. The essential quality of sunlight is its brilliance, and this being expressed enforces the sense that poverty can be beautified and momentarily enriched by the transfiguring influence of the sun. The artist has the faculty of setting the imagination to work, and it is to be observed that he only accomplishes this

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as a result of the fundamental correctness of his work. This is especially shown in the relative tones of light and shade that give reality to the effect, and herein a lesson is conveyed. Such a dark shadow could have no existence out of doors, where the shade is always modified by reflected lights, chiefly the reflection of the sky; but interior shadows are not subject to this influence and consequently assume great density; producing a contrast of light and shade that is not to be found under other conditions.

This is also illustrated in Mr. E. R. Ashton's brilliant work, "One of the Faithful." The dark shadow against which the picturesque figure tells so effectively has its significance, and is not to be regarded as an artificial means of throwing the main subject into relief—a matter that needs to be emphasized, because the uninstructed amateur often finds great temptation in a black background imported solely for the purpose of making a figure stand out prominently, and having no significance of its own. In a general way a very dark background is to be condemned for the reason that it is not atmospheric, but where, as in this case, it is a natural incident of the scene it may be very valuable. The depth of shadow here suggests an interior from which reflected light has been as far as possible excluded, a welcome refuge from the fierceness of an Eastern sun, and the inclusion of this shadow is most useful, not only to the predominance of the pious reader, but also to the effect of sunlight. It is necessary to call attention to such fundamental considerations, for they are just what are most likely to be overlooked by the majority of those who are certain to admire this



ONE OF THE FAITHFUL

By E. R. ASHTON

COMPOSITION

singularly striking photograph, with its beautiful tones, delicate modelling, and colour. It is scarcely necessary to point out the expressiveness of the figure, the features, and hands, and the admirable arrangement of the drapery, for they are not likely to be missed, but the tone of the complexion and the beard, the glare of sunlight and the suggestion of colour on the flagstones and mat, the influence of the emphatic placing of the highest light on the turban are matters of artistic arrangement that may escape the untrained vision, yet it is their nice adjustment that gives the work its distinction and force.

COMPOSITION

Hard and fast rules are not very desirable in regard to composition, for it is essentially a matter of individual taste and decorative feeling. It is, however, well to remember that a picture, before it is an illustration of any particular subject, should be a pattern composed of lines and of masses of light and shade, and these, of course, should be in harmonious relationship, so that their pleasing influence may attract the eye without reference to the matters depicted. The object of composition is to gratify the eye and to keep it in the picture. For this reason emphasis is a very important element of composition, giving point to the pattern, holding the attention of the observer, and accentuating the main theme. Evidently, therefore, emphasis must be so deftly placed that the vision, while attracted

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by it, may be conscious of the picture as a whole, and not range outside the limits of the frame. Hence emphasis is not appropriate at edges or corners, but should be near the centre. No doubt it would answer these requirements if it were exactly in the centre, but to place it there would be to introduce an element of symmetry, not carried out elsewhere, and not demanded by the pattern.

Directly we accentuate the exact centre of a picture, all the space surrounding the emphasized point becomes symmetrical, and in dealing with design it is necessary to consider not only the pattern, but also the empty part. Symmetry is unsatisfying and unsympathetic in pictorial art. It is too obviously calculated, too complete in itself, too independent of outside influences. Nature is not symmetrical; her arrangements are full of irregularities, and are not sufficient in themselves, but part of a great scheme. Perhaps one ought to qualify the statement as to the unsymmetrical character of Nature. Of course many living things, animal and vegetable, are constructed on a symmetrical plan, but their symmetry is not obvious, and the pictorialist is only concerned with appearances. Symmetry is the foe of vitality and movement; thus a living butterfly seldom presents itself to the eye in a symmetrical form. The shape is felt, not measured; and so it is with a human being, who would look very rigid and uninteresting if all his proportions were rendered in exact duplication. Nature hides her symmetry when she has occasion to use it, and has various devices to prevent us from recognizing the exact form—the incessant activity of birds, the bending of the leaf,



ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH

By WALTER BENINGTON

COMPOSITION

the tilt of flower petals, the influence of wind, sun, and shadow.

It is the same with contrasts of colour. There are such strong modifying agents in the shape of direct sunlight, half-tone, reflected light and colour, shadow and atmosphere, that the result is harmony after all. And where they are not thus reconciled it is found that one of the parties to the contrast has to sink its significance for the purpose of enhancing the effect of the other. This is also the case in contrasts of line. Either the straightness of the tree is enforced and beautified by the decorative curves of its foliage, as in Mr. Benington's "On Hampstead Heath," or else the effect of the curves is heightened by the proximity of the straight lines. When there is no foliage the lines are in harmonious relationship, illustrating the principle of growth springing from a common centre, which, indeed, is one of great importance in decorative arrangement. Hence in the composition of line the repetition of harmonious line is desirable, and where contrasting lines are introduced they should be treated with reserve, so that they may not compete with the main lines, but may give them increased importance.

Mr. M. Arbuthnot's "Launching the Boat" is an example of well-managed composition. It will be noticed that an agreeable curve is formed by the arrangement of the boats and that this harmonizes with the line of the distance; also that interest culminates at the point of emphasis, where the leading incident is enforced by the employment of strong lights and shadows. The vigorous activity of the men is admirably suggested—no one can doubt that they are putting their strength

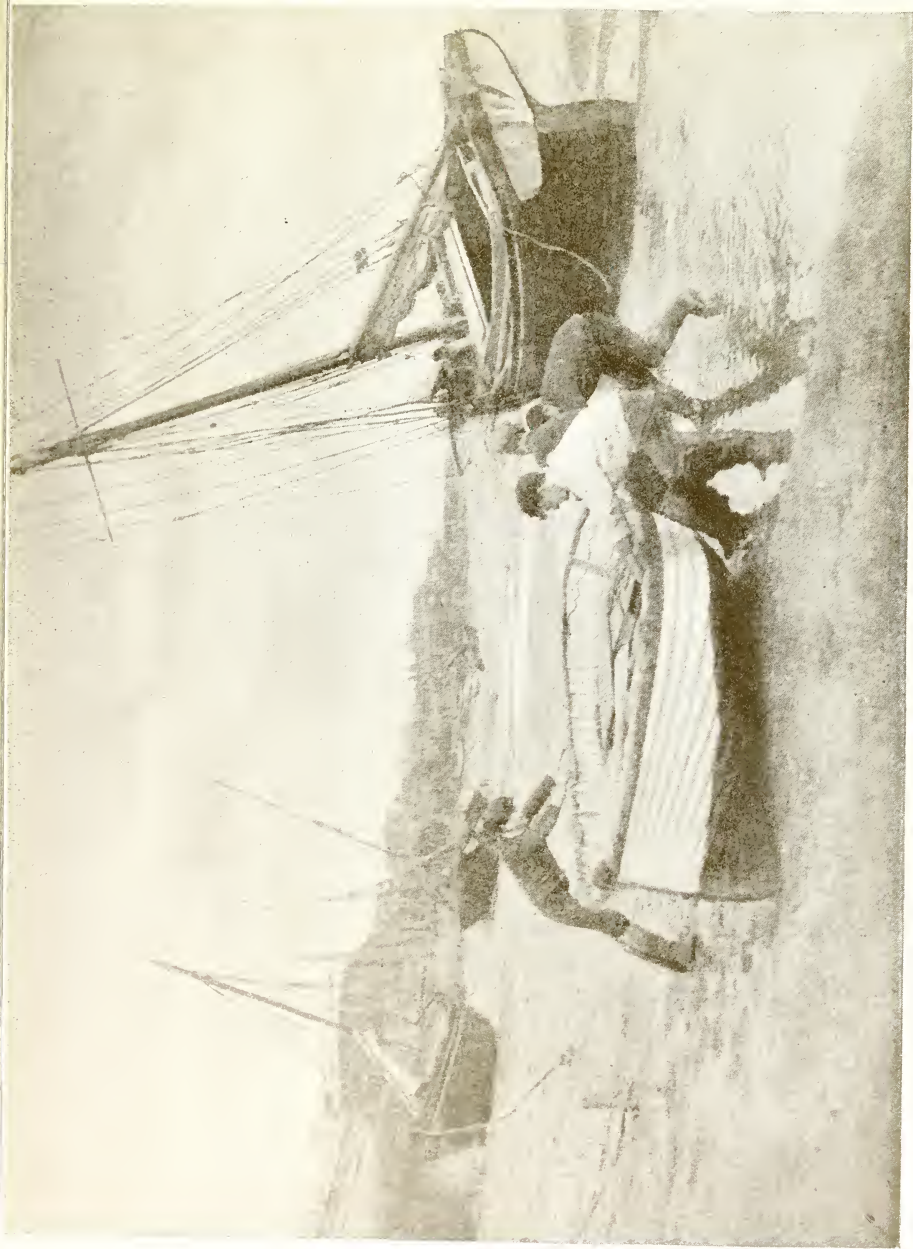
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into their work. There are some well-considered tones, notably in the distance, and in the sky, and altogether the scene is both happily selected and skilfully rendered.

BALANCE

If symmetry and its opposite, absolute contrast, may not be used pictorially, it is most necessary that their substitute, balance, should be employed. Balance gives proportion without symmetry; for instance, plants may not be exactly the same on all sides, yet, from whatever point of view they are seen, they do not give the impression of one side being overweighted by the other, and if we imagined them without the support of the roots, we could not say they would have a tendency to fall in any particular direction. Masses on one side are compensated for by masses higher up or lower down on the other, or perhaps the counterpoise is divided, a large mass being balanced by two or three smaller ones. Masses should generally be kept big and simple to make them impressive and to avoid the sensation of the main structure being cut up or disjointed, and the chief lines should be given free play, so that they may lead the eye in easy fashion to and from the emphasized point. This may also be led up to by subsidiary points, constituting minor emphasis.

An essential principle of design is that the space occupied should be comfortably filled, but I think that this will naturally follow when there is an



LAUNCHING THE BOAT

BY M. ARBUTHNOT

BALANCE

appreciation of balance, and empty spaces are regarded as having their decorative value. It is this general feeling of comfort and fitness that makes agreeable composition, and for this reason the clashing elements that might be introduced by violent contrasts of light and tone are undesirable. Just as lines of conflicting direction may, if kept in subjection, be employed to help the main line, so contrasting tones, if not too forcible, will assist those of greatest importance, and through being kept on friendly terms will promote the sense of harmony and balance. This is more readily grasped when we consider the effect of the opposite arrangement. A full black is just as conspicuous as a full white, and if both are used we are in the presence of two chieftains struggling for supremacy. We only want one leader, and all his following should make a smoothly-working organization. It should be understood that these remarks do not apply to the art of design, but only to the representation of Nature.

Composition is an underlying quality that adds to the beauty of a picture without being itself much in evidence. Many achieve it almost unconsciously as a result of an intuitive feeling for the grace or impressiveness of line, or the balance of masses; but there is no reason why the arrangement should not be calculated, if the effort is not apparent. The artist may find in his subject a particular form of line, say Hogarth's line of beauty, and may make this his basis, keeping it in view all through the process of construction, introducing other lines to harmonize with it and eliminating those that are hostile to its effect, but treating it with such reserve that the fundamental design is felt rather

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than recognized. Whatever the form may be it is well that it should accord with the spirit of the theme, for lines are very expressive, and their shapes may make all the difference to the impression that is conveyed. The dignity, solemnity, and strength of vertical lines, the repose of horizontal ones, the grace of wide and sweeping curves, and the frivolity of little curves, are qualities that may be used very significantly in a picture, as they have frequently been used in architecture. To appreciate the appropriate suggestiveness of line, one need only consider how this quality would be destroyed by angularity in the portrait of a graceful girl.

DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT

Occasionally we find photographers indulging in fanciful schemes of line purely for their decorative effect, and without any thought of reality. Figures may be introduced, but they are only dream-folk whose mission it is to become a part of a system of curves, or to carry an accent.

Such ornamental worlds, created by artistic imagination, are too frail for the habitation of beings of flesh and blood, and it would not do to feel that the inhabitants could breathe, and might at any moment yawn and stretch out their arms and legs with disastrous consequences. This is why Aubrey Beardsley took care never to make his figures human; they could not have been trusted to live among his gossamer tangles of line without doing damage.



THE SPINNING-WHEEL

By J. CRUWYS RICHARDS

DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT

Where the decorative quality is given predominance, naturalistic representation has to be sacrificed. More generally, and doubtless also more appropriately, in the case of photography, the decorative arrangement is kept in subjection to, and is used for the purpose of, enhancing the grace of the figure.

It would be doing an injustice to "The Spinning Wheel," by Mr. J. Cruwys Richards, to regard it merely as an illustration of a woman engaged in spinning. It is in reality a fanciful composition of line and tone, wherein a refined head is emphasized by the darkness of the hair, which makes a strong note against the soft light on the wall, and the figure and drapery are employed for the production of effective curves, in harmony with the form of the head. Solidity is imparted to the figure in a simple way by the high light which brings the nearest arm well in front of the other, but reality, though sufficiently expressed, is not more in evidence than the decorative intention, and it may be worth while to point out how this is assisted in an unobtrusive way by the circular form of the light on the wall, and also by the curved line from the head to the top of the spindle. It is by such subtle and almost hidden means that the sense of design is gratified. The picture is one of the kind that can be dwelt on with an increasing sense of pleasure; the handsome model grows more beautiful, and the suavity of line, especially the S curve from the top of the head to the extremity of the robe, takes possession of the beholder.

Emphasis is of value in a variety of ways, and it accords with observation, because no one can look at any scene without being more attracted by

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a particular part of it than by the rest. If he tries to give equal attention to all the objects it includes, he will see nothing clearly; in fact, the human eye is unconsciously selective, while that of the camera is neither conscious nor selective. The eye of the artist is both selective and discriminating.

Emphasis may be given by the use of the highest light, the darkest shadow, or strong definition at the point of greatest interest. Sometimes only one of these may be necessary; but as a general rule it may be taken that not less than two are efficient, while all three in alliance are certain to form a compelling attraction. The sharp delineation of objects, however, is rarely acceptable, for it is destructive of aerial perspective. Definition, though a special and characteristic attribute of photography, is in reality a questionable virtue from the artistic standpoint, for the camera carries its precision beyond the range of the human eye. A picture should not attempt too much, and if it represents more than the eye can see, there is a very pressing need to reduce its record to the level, not of ordinary, but of artistic vision. "Finish" should be understood to mean finding more tones for the expression of structure and light, and this generally signifies the searching for additional planes.

So strong an accent as the highest light or the darkest shadow or the contrast of both together should help the composition and the general effect, otherwise it will be a hindrance through distracting attention from the important to the unimportant. It will give point and vivacity to the whole work, or disturb its balance and diminish its interest. Another factor that may be used in combination

DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT

with the highest light and the darkest shadow to constitute a strong point of emphasis is the incident of greatest interest, but this is an accent of a different kind, for it appeals to thought as well as vision. Incident does not necessarily signify action; any object that has stimulated artistic perception may be the main incident. The factors referred to should be made to work harmoniously towards a common end.

Emphasis should have a naturalistic as well as an artistic basis. If these coincide, there can be no question that the spot is rightly chosen, but if they are at variance, it may be as well to abandon the picture on the ground that it does not "compose." It is a question to be decided when the point of view is selected, and before the picture is made. Sometimes, of course, a little artistic licence is permissible. Nature may say, The darkest shadow should be here. Art may rejoin, I require it there. Occasionally such a position admits of compromise. There may be two shadows whose difference is scarcely perceptible, and the artist, for the sake of composition, may slightly accentuate one, and slightly diminish the other. But in a general way one would not recommend the taking of liberties. One may choose a scene in which the accents fall where they are required; it is only in selection, the ever-present duty of the artist, that discretion may safely be exercised, so that competing or needless accents may be eliminated in order to give due force to those that form the motive for the picture.

The darkest mass, like the highest light, in any decorative pattern must necessarily be of the utmost importance, and should be so disposed as to help the general contour of lines and arrangement

ART AND THE CAMERA

of masses. One may gain an idea of how far this is achieved by turning the picture upside down and contemplating it as a mere pattern. Wherever the lightest or darkest spot may be, there will the eye inevitably be attracted, and it is requisite that this emphasis should be placed where attention is most desired. If the darkest shadow is in juxtaposition with the highest light, this combined demand on the vision of the beholder is quite irresistible, and in this way you have a means of engaging primary consideration for the most interesting detail of your work. The incident, however characteristic or charming, must necessarily gain force, and focus attention, if treated with such emphasis, and the subsidiary matters in half-tone will not distract the eye from the main motive, though their presence will be duly felt. But the highest light does not always fall next the darkest shadow—in many cases this would be an impossibility. Still, they are both strong points of emphasis and should be so utilized, though they should not be given equal importance. In a dark picture the highest light will be the strongest accent, and should be relied on to give the greatest force to the main theme; the darkest shadow, if it cannot be combined with the highest light, being employed as an accent of secondary importance. In a light picture the process is reversed, but in any case the space that lies between these two accents will acquire prominence through their influence. In placing the darkest shadow, therefore, it is useful to consider it in relation to the highest light, and especially to estimate the combined effect of these points of emphasis on the leading idea of the picture, and the decorative scheme.



THE WHITE SAIL

By ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY

DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT

But in pictorial work these accents have a further duty, and here we come to the naturalistic side of the question. Evidently it would be ridiculous to place the darkest shadow or the highest light in such a position as to satisfy the requirements of emphasis and composition unless it had a justification in Nature. Therefore, I have suggested that in selecting a subject care should be taken to note how the strong accents will come in the finished work.

The key is in the study of values and aerial perspective. There can be no dark shadows in the distance, and the farther a particular shadow is from the eye of the observer, the lighter it must appear. Conversely, the nearer this shadow is to the eye the darker it will seem. Such is the effect of atmosphere on shadows; but a shadow in the middle distance may still be the darkest shadow if the foreground shadows are by their nature light, like passing shadows of clouds. The degree in which light can be reflected from the sky or from any strongly illuminated object is, as I have remarked, one of the determining factors of the density of a shadow, and this, therefore, is a matter that should be considered in deciding on the relative values of shadows, and fixing on the darkest. Light is similarly influenced by aerial perspective, gaining brilliance as it approaches the foreground, and its intensity becomes further enhanced by the juxtaposition of stronger shadows.

"The White Sail," by Mr. Alexander Keighley, is distinguished by much beauty of tone and line, by truth to Nature, and also by the originality of its conception. It is instructive to note the harmony of line due to the fine curve in the distant

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houses which is repeated in the sail. The tone of the sail against the sky affords an instance of the subtle and accurate observation that Mr. Keighley cultivates. Consider the matter for a moment, and it will be seen that while the sail takes its place in aerial perspective, it is the main theme of the picture, and necessarily emphasized. But though near the foreground it does not obtrude, it does not, so to speak, jump out of the frame, it is just where it ought to be. Then look at the sky, and one notices the vast extent of atmospheric space that exists between the sail and the horizon. A just balance has been struck, and these tones are in their proper relationship. Probably those who have not given much attention to tone will scarcely recognize how much delicate perception such adjustment implies. A more than ordinarily sensitive vision is also manifested in the treatment of the water. There are few things more difficult than to keep a distant light on water in aerial perspective, and to maintain the appearance of a flat, receding plane. It is, of course, a question of tone, and in this Mr. Keighley is seldom at fault. Photographers may imagine the watchful alertness with which he waited for the boat to come into the right position, and exposed at the exact moment to fix his composition as he desired.

A grand pictorial subject has been secured by him in "The Bridge," which was one of the most successful pictures in the exhibition of the Photographic Salon, 1906. Some fine lines are made by the arch and parapets, and it should be noticed how these curves help the composition in contrast with the perpendicular and horizontal lines elsewhere. The central figure is forcibly emphasized



THE BRIDGE

BY ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY

EXPRESSIVENESS

by being placed in juxtaposition to the brilliant dash of sunlight and the decided lines of the steps. The effect of this accentuated point is much assisted by the fact that it conflicts with no other, the surrounding part of the picture being made up of atmospheric tones that give distance to the houses, and quietly-suggested detail that imparts interest to the picture throughout. The judicious tone that places the man on the far parapet in his proper aerial perspective, the scintillating light on the sail, and the unobtrusive, yet natural figures in the foreground are among the matters that help to make this an impressive and dignified work, pervaded by a strong sentiment of romance, and effectively composed.

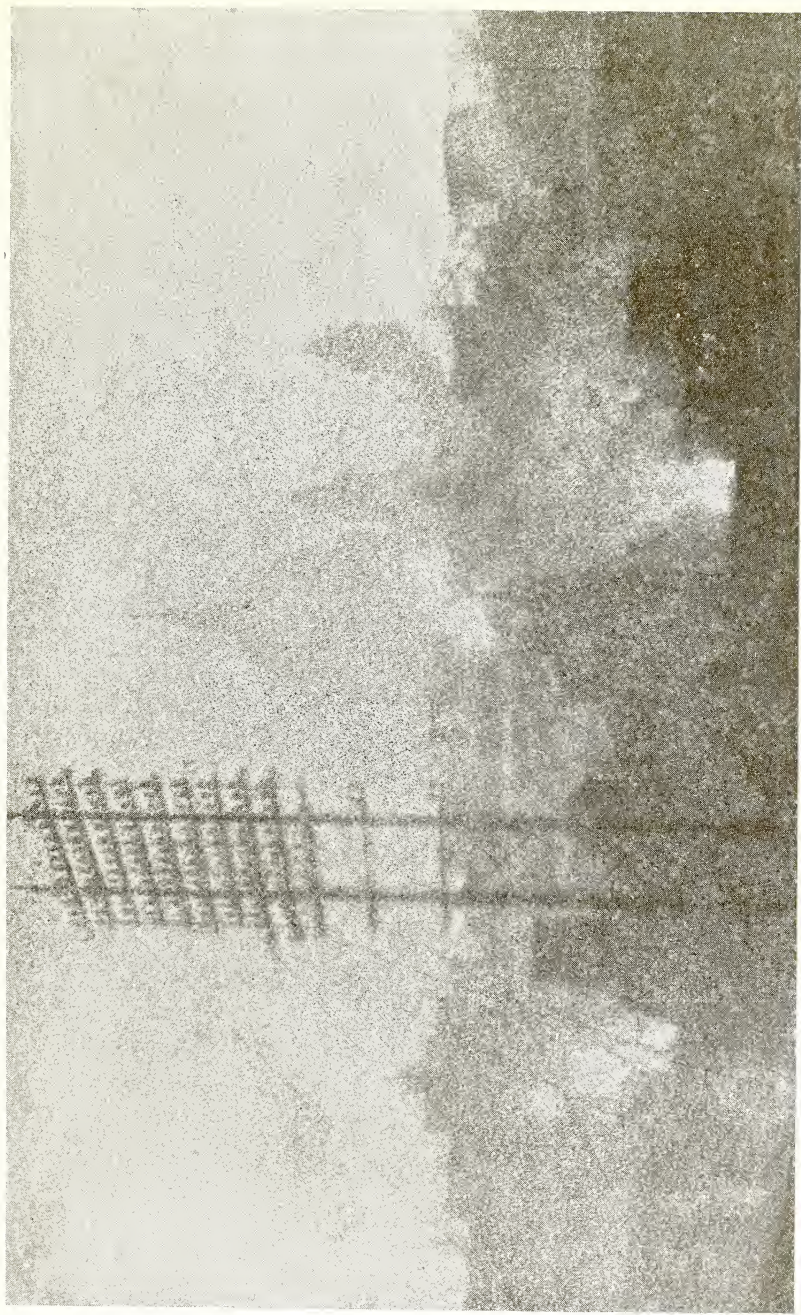
EXPRESSIVENESS IN NATURE AND ART

“Art,” says Georges Sand, “aims not at the resemblance, but the expression.” Nature is but the source of inspiration—art the result. Much that is in Nature must be suppressed in order to give emphasis to that which is expressive and pictorial, and this again must be kept in tone, so that the picture may be marked by individual refinement, harmony, and reserve. In depicting a London street scene, for instance—and London offers a field that is full of possibilities for the photographer as Mr. Walter Benington has effectively exemplified in “Among the Housetops”—it is particularly necessary that emphasis should be

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given to some point of special interest, not only for its own sake, but also in order that through the corresponding simplification some sense of harmony may be imparted to the surrounding turmoil, while this is still sufficiently suggested. In a picture of Spring the salient and characteristic quality would be the youth and sprightliness of the season, and to convey this sensation is of more importance than to give an exact presentation of blossoming trees. This matter of expressiveness, like all things that exist below the surface, may be regarded as obscure; but perhaps it will become more clear if we consider by way of example the contrast between the treatment of a typical London scene and that of some remote wintry forest.

The difference of sentiment between the two scenes will at once be apparent; but how shall we define the essential contrast? The superficial one is, of course, obvious: the soul of the matter needs to be sought. Perhaps it consists in the fact that in the one case we are looking on the handiwork of a man, and in the other on that of Nature, which is always on a great plan, and consequently harmonizes, while the works of man are on many plans and often produce discord. There are great cathedrals of logical design, and beautiful gardens, and these, so far as they accord with a large scheme, are exceptions. But man's achievements, when collected in a haphazard agglomeration, as we see them in London, will surely produce discord of line and colour, even of sound. The chimes of Westminster mingle with the hooting of a motor-car, while the Abbey forms its background. In fact, the pervading sentiment is one



AMONG THE HOUSETOPS

BY WALTER BENINGTON

EXPRESSIVENESS

of individual intention without apparent interest in the scheme of the whole.

To get at the spirit of a London scene, therefore, the conflicting elements have to be noted, and they help to give the "busy" quality that is demanded. Not that the picture itself need be discordant. Light and atmosphere can bring even the competing incidents of the Metropolis into such appropriate relationship as to make them pictorial. Moreover, it is to be remembered that with all the clash of individual energy there is a pervading spirit that makes for the order of the community as a whole, and with all the apparent confusion of the streets it cannot be said that they are not orderly in a general way. Order has to be extracted out of discord.

Still, one cannot overlook the haphazard lines and colours incidental to the turmoil of the London streets—the expression of the energy of an orderly community. But they should not be allowed to disturb the harmony of the picture, and therefore they need only be suggested, while stress is laid on a point of main interest that in a measure typifies the rest. In all these accidents will be recognized a point of essential difference between the city and the forest. In the one the prevailing discord may be recognized and arranged in pictorial order; in the other there is a dominant harmony which only needs to be accentuated. If in the forest any disturbing accident of line or colour arise, it should be ignored, for it is not in accordance with the fundamental spirit of a great scheme. Imposing and harmonious lines of solemn trunks, with branches that enhance and decorate their dignity, a rigid simplicity and an absence of

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conflicting incidents, contribute to the sentiment of the scene, and it is remarkable how this is intensified by the repetition of perpendicular lines, which therefore must be used with a due regard for their effect. Their impressive character has been well exemplified in architectural use, and there can be little doubt that it was in the forest that the germ of Gothic architecture was found. One will take care to eliminate such special attributes as belong to the town—such disjointed lines, for instance, and dissimilar objects as typify its turmoil—from the representation of the peace of the forest. It is dangerous to accentuate such matters as tangles of undergrowth and broken branches, for by doing so one may diminish the main effect that conveys the expression of the scene. These things, though they appertain to the forest, are not typical, as they can be found elsewhere, and should therefore be simplified.

In the exceedingly delicate and fanciful conception, "A Spring Idyll," with its graceful trees preparing to don their foliage, its pervading atmosphere, and its rustic sweethearts, the wonder is that with so much realism such a poetical feeling could have been imparted to the work. But Nature herself is poetical, and we need not be afraid of what she provides if we only see it aright. This picture seems to have come together so naturally, to compose so happily, and to be so full of the air of Spring, that its rightness is acknowledged at a glance. Yet in less skilful hands, under a less informed vision, it might not have escaped the commonplace. The objects would have been there, but the spirit would have been absent. It is worth while then to consider what has been done for it



A SPRING IDYLL

BY ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY

EXPRESSIVENESS

by Mr. Keighley's sensitive and sympathetic treatment. First, it should be noticed that the central portion of the picture, including the two figures, the silver birch, and the wild flowers in the foreground, is emphasized, and that the remainder, the sides and top of the design, are dealt with in a more simple and suggestive way. The central portion, indeed, would make a picture by itself, but how much it would lose in space and atmosphere without the rest. The two figures would have increased importance, but the sense of the immensity and mystery of Nature would not be felt. It is in order that this feeling should have effect that the figures have been given but a minor and incidental *rôle*, and their faces and costumes have not been particularized too definitely. Appreciation and study are due to the arrangement of light and the adjustment of values. The soft, broad light, so well placed in the sky, gives life and significance to the whole work by helping to suggest the genial promise of Spring; the strong modelling of the foreground brings this part of the picture forward, so that between this and the delicate suggestiveness of the distant trees there is a great feeling of space and atmosphere. The work is true to Nature, and remarkably instructive.

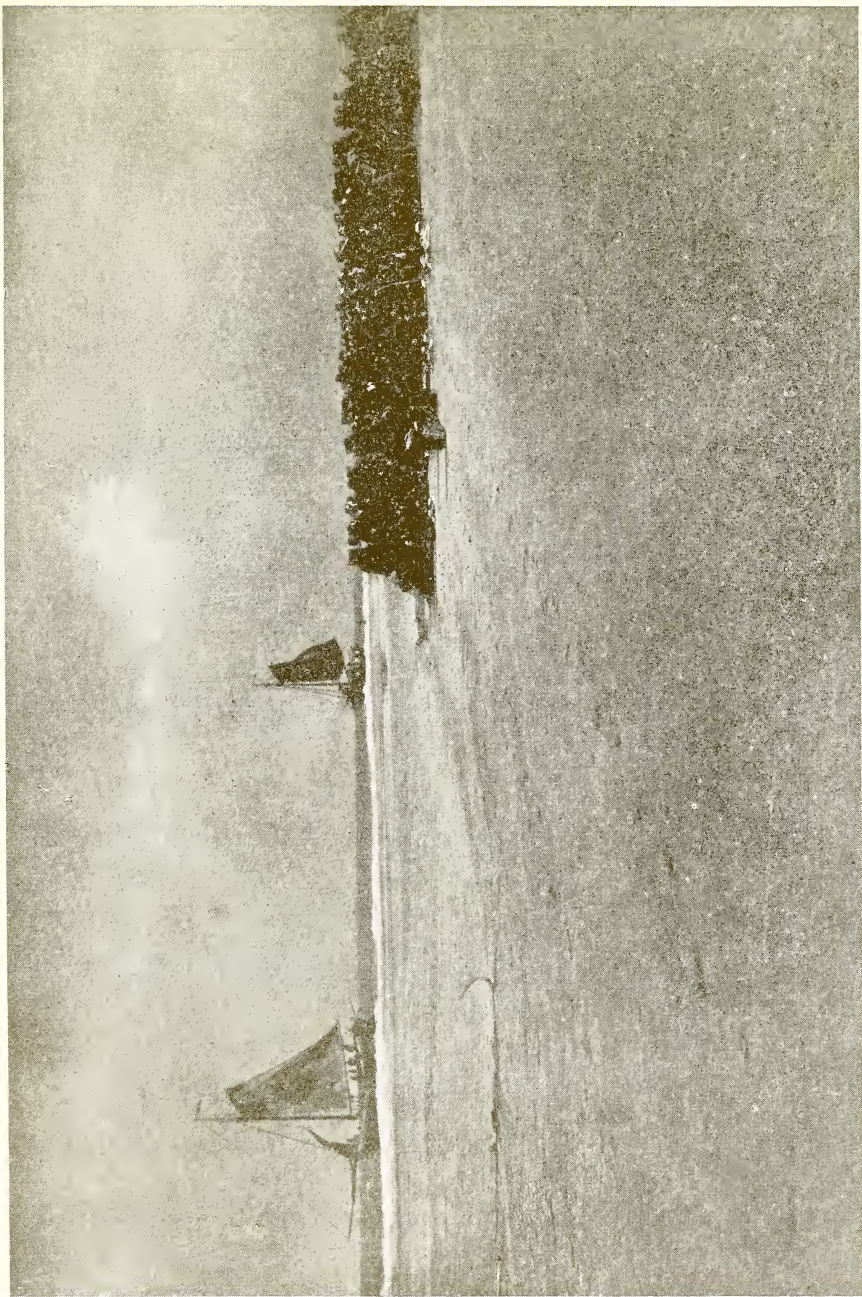
Mr. J. Craig Annan's picture of "The Fish Market, Holland," shows how the spirit of a scene may be brought out effectively in a quiet way. The sense of atmosphere is much assisted by the single subdued light in the sky, softly reflected on the sea and sand; and though the treatment shows so much reserve there is a lot of motion in the boats and in the water. The crowd is broadly suggested; at such a distance from the spectator its

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details, of course, would be indistinguishable, and if there had been any attempt to make them out this would have resulted in bringing the people forward, to the destruction of aerial perspective. No one can miss the suggestive character of this work, but it has another merit that may be overlooked, if only because it is so necessary and fundamental that one is liable to take it for granted. The foreground comes forward. Of course it does, one might say who has not had much experience of the peculiarities of photography. Yet one so often sees the receding plane of a flat foreground neglected that a special welcome seems due to the successful realization of the effect.

Expression marks small things as well as big, still-life and humanity, the sentiment of Nature, and the mood of the artist. The poise of a chair, the spring of a bough from a tree, the dreary solemnity of winter, the brightness of Spring, and the personality of a man or woman, all have significance, which is to be rendered by a negative no less than by a positive process, namely, the rejection of such matters as do not in themselves aid in conveying the particular idea that it is desired to produce. It is not that details should be ignored merely on the ground that they are not suggestive, for all things have expression; it is because they do not always express themselves helpfully to the main intention. No passengers or stowaways are wanted; all the crew must be working units, and things that do not add vitality to the sentiment or theme are encumbrances that may be thrown overboard.

In a general way, it may be said that details are the enemy of expression. Among their abundance



THE FISH MARKET, HOLLAND

By J. CRAIG ANNAN

EXPRESSIVENESS

there are few that help, and for the most part they are so much weight carried to no purpose. But some are significant and valuable, and it is necessary to search for these, and to select them with as much discriminating regard for their usefulness as a traveller would apply to the contents of his knapsack. If their weight or bulk is more hindrance to the attainment of the end in view than they can compensate for by their assistance, they must be discarded.

If one is stirred by the radiance of a pair of eyes there is no need to place a stream of sunlight in competition with them. To do so would be to weaken, probably to destroy, the effect desired. This, it may be said, is an extreme instance; but in other cases there is only the difference of degree, and the principle applies throughout the whole range of pictorial art. Accessories either help or hamper the paramount idea; the point is to ascertain exactly what their influence may be before accepting them or throwing them over. Some will tell you that they feel this influence without precisely weighing it; but this is a dangerous test for such as have not cultivated their artistic sensitiveness to a very high point.

Details in pictures may be regarded in much the same way as ornament in architecture. Ornament is appropriate when it emphasizes and beautifies the lines of construction; but the structure is the important thing, and if the decoration hides it, or claims attention merely on its own account, without reference to its mission, it becomes superfluous, and therefore detrimental to the whole.

It is the structure rather than the ornament that tells. The structure of a tree must be looked for under

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its covering of foliage, and the mood of Nature is felt apart from her many bewildering details. To get at the individual, the portraitist may often have to forgo a variety of plausible superfluities. At least he is on safe ground when he devotes his attention to what is enduring and refuses to rely absolutely on exterior adornments or defects. If he has a penetrating and sympathetic vision, he may reveal an indication of the underlying spirit.

But he must also express himself, for in this way he divests his work, whatever it may be, of its mechanical quality, and gives it temperament. He need not trouble himself much about this, for he is certain to make his work as characteristic as his handwriting if he avoids the two pitfalls, imitation and timidity; not copying other workers' styles, and having the courage of his own convictions. So he will assert himself unwittingly. It is only when there is a conscious effort at self-expression that it degenerates into affectation. It is scarcely possible to lay too much stress on the importance of the individual outlook.

The expression of Nature is often subjective, depending on the mood of her interpreter. Two men may represent the same scene, and their pictures may be absolutely different, yet equally true, because they each reflect a particular mood or temperament. One picture may be gay, the other melancholy. One may be a joyous revel in the beauty that exists; the other poetical, mysterious, and restrained. An autumn day may cause one to rejoice in the feast of colour, and another to repine at the presage of winter. In either case the mood will claim sympathy if it is decidedly expressed.



HEAD OF A PEASANT

BY E. O. HOPPE

EXPRESSIVENESS

The completeness with which success is attained in conveying the spirit of a theme depends much on sympathetic handling. One does not want dainty workmanship in the representation of grim rocks, and such bold, rough appearance as would be justified in their case would not be appropriate in a picture of flowers or children. The nature of the subject calls for a corresponding feeling in the technique, so that not only the rocks but the whole picture may convey a rugged impressiveness in one case, and in the other the sense of refinement may be aided by endowing the work throughout with delicate manipulation and tone. Such harmonious relationship between subject and treatment adds to the completeness of the whole, and strengthens its effect.

Mr. E. O. Hoppe's "Head of a Peasant," has qualities that could not be produced by merely mechanical means and without the influence of personal feeling. Every one will agree that this is an extremely natural, sympathetic, and characteristic rendering of the head of an old rustic. But will it be generally recognized how its expressiveness is obtained? I fancy not, and therefore it may be useful to mention one or two of the less obvious points that suggest themselves. There is the light in the sky, which may not at first seem to be of very much importance, but is really a dominating influence; for one thing it carries the imagination beyond the border of the picture, and explains the illumination, showing that the head is in a natural light, and this accounts for an underlying sensation of rightness. On the other side of the picture the light is not continued in the sky, and the shadow-side of the head par-

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takes of the atmosphere, with the important result that one is able to feel the roundness of the skull. Then there is the simplicity of the conception, shown in the treatment of the background and the coat, and this simplicity not only throws emphasis on the head, but accords with the sentiment of the subject. A very simple-minded, good-tempered old man, one thinks, perhaps without considering the simplicity of treatment, and the gleam of the sky which brightens the face.

Here, then, is an easily-grasped indication of how expressiveness is obtained. The head is very suggestive of the uncultivated geniality of the bucolic mind. But suppose the light were not there, suppose the costume and landscape were full of elaborate work, and it is evident that the character would not shine out so clearly. The simple-mindedness of the subject is felt because of a single-minded intention to depict it, and the adoption of appropriate means to that end. I need not refer to the modelling of the features, for this part of the picture will immediately engage attention. It is, however, necessary to remark on the absence of hard precision, which accounts for the fleeting and temporary appearance of the smile. Sharp definition would have converted the smile into a set and irritating grin.

Photographers who like to endow their friends with a pleasant expression may be invited to ponder on this subject. I have elsewhere referred to the value of a reposeful mien in a portrait, and the scope that it gives to the imagination of the beholder. But the conditions are reversed when a smile is fixed, as, in fact, it generally is when it appears in a photograph, so that one cannot get

SIMPLIFICATION

away from it, nor think of the face with any other expression. In such a case the smile becomes wearisome and aggravating. One could not live with such a metallic smile. Even the white teeth and the relentless stretch of actresses' lips in the illustrated papers lose their charm after they have been contemplated for many minutes. There is a feeling that it must be painful to keep them in such rigidity. Hence the amateur may be advised to distrust the fascination of a smile. When it is momentary it is delightful, but it is liable to lose its charm if rendered permanent. Even the model cannot be relied on to maintain its original effect, and the longer it lasts the more artificial it becomes. A smiling countenance may, however, be tastefully suggested in a way that hints at the transient character of the expression. The principle is that the smile should not be emphasized, but should be subordinated to strong emphasis elsewhere. In the illustration there is forcible emphasis on the eyes, and one feels that the smile is not of the first importance, but is only a passing incident, and it is the more agreeable on this account. I remember the ingenious comment that people smile with their eyes, not with their teeth.

SIMPLIFICATION

There is a passage in that entertaining and instructive little volume, Hunt's "Talks about Art," that has always seemed to me specially deserving of being fixed in the memory for use in

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moments of doubt, viz.: "When values are so nearly alike that it is difficult to distinguish them, make them alike, and thus learn to simplify your masses."

At first it might seem that the advice involved a certain neglect of perseverance and investigation. If there were two tones, perhaps arising from difference of texture, and the conscientious artist knew that they were different, yet could not separate them, he might well imagine that the duty rested on him of deciding the question one way or another before he could consider his picture finished. I am far from saying that the effort should not be made, if only for the reason that in this way one cultivates acuteness and subtlety of pictorial vision. But while an investigation so elusive is being carried on, there is always the danger of weakening the spirit of the picture as a whole. One might eventually succeed in differentiating, say, the cloth from the velvet, but at too great a cost to the total result.

Supposing, however, that the feat is accomplished successfully, there must always come in the question—Is it worth while? Sometimes it may be; for such exactitude may possibly enhance the interest of the most important part of the picture, though, if it falls elsewhere, one may conclude with some confidence that it is not worth while. The reason must be apparent if we remember that every additional tone away from the centre of interest must weaken the emphasis given to that part; while, conversely, the more we simplify that which is of secondary importance, the more forcibly are the eyes of the beholder attracted to the point of focus.



BY THE RIVER

By A. HORSLEY HINTON

SIMPLIFICATION

Not that one portion of a picture should be highly elaborated and the rest vague, but the simplification of the unimportant strengthens that which is interesting. While simplification aids aerial perspective or distance, it is often necessary, also, in a foreground. A forcibly modelled foreground certainly helps to bring it forward and to throw the rest back, but there is also the consideration that a sharply defined foreground competes and interferes with the point of emphasis, if it is anywhere near the centre of the picture. How to keep the foreground well in front, and at the same time to maintain the emphasis where it is wanted is a problem of some difficulty. It will generally be found necessary in some degree to simplify the foreground, while relying solely on truth of tone and values to secure aerial perspective. Thus simplification is not to be undertaken in a wholesale way, but needs to be applied with much discrimination and in varying degrees according to requirements.

Mr. A. Horsley Hinton's "By the River" illustrates, among other matters, the effective use of material for a foreground. It will be observed that there is just enough definition among the thistles and grasses to show their character, to make them important and decorative, and to bring this part of the picture well to the front, so that distance and atmosphere are felt beyond. A sharply defined portrait of all these foreground growths would have given them undue prominence, and would thus have diminished the interest that belongs to the bare trees against the sky, and the great sense of space, which, indeed, make the main interest of the work. Here, then, is a notable

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example of the perception that preserves the big effect while keeping the smaller interest within bounds and causing it to help, not to compete with, the real intention. The subject is seen in a big way, and that is the indication of the artistic outlook; but the uninstructed observer sees in a little way, missing the grandeur of a scene as a whole through being diverted by a multitude of small things. This picture has the breath of Autumn. As usual in Mr. Hinton's work the sky is of great interest, very luminous and delicate in tone, yet with a suggestion of severity in the air. It will be noticed how the gentle curves in the clouds help through the contrast of line to give effect to the straight stems of the trees, and so to suggest the hardihood with which they maintain their exposed position.

While details may be simplified into unobtrusiveness, this should always be done with a close regard for values; in fact, it might be set down as an axiom that the more slightly details are treated, the more need is there that they should be right in value.

Evidently we cannot have emphasis in one place without simplification in others—the two things are as much the complement of each other as light and shadow—and it is just as well to remember that neither is introduced entirely for its own sake, but to some extent for the purpose of giving effect to the other. There is beauty in well-placed definition, the fascination of good craftsmanship as well as the force of a dominating interest, and there is beauty in discriminating simplification—the charm of mystery, suggestion, and restraint; and when the two qualities are

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happily associated, the beauty of each is enhanced.

Another reason for carrying out Hunt's advice, even at the point of emphasis, is that simple masses of tone, properly placed, have a decorative value. Plain masses, expertly managed, give dignity to a composition, and to substitute fidgety detail for them is a poor exchange. Every one must recognize the sense of grandeur and strength that is imparted to the work of J. F. Millet, in a great measure through the protection of his masses. Strength and simplicity go hand in hand in art, and it may, perhaps, be thought curious that simplicity should have such force, for in real life, however admirable, it is scarcely impressive. But the two things must not be confused. In art the simplicity is rather apparent than real; it is arrived at by much searching and by dint of experience—it is the art that hides art. At its best it signifies the full comprehension, not the neglect, of the details that are simplified; it implies a sacrifice of the parts to the whole, and a recognition of the relative importance of things. Simplicity stands for directness and candour, qualities that always carry conviction. It goes straight to the point and avoids confusing the issue.

Nature is complex; but art through its very simplicity may extract the essence of Nature. Yet Nature artistically seen is not so very complex after all. Light, shade, and atmosphere are great simplifiers that unite myriads of little objects, and mass them in broad tones. It is courting perplexity to aim at the objects enveloped and only partly revealed by these phenomena, and to neglect the more or less transparent veil that they throw over

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the whole scene. Our reverence for Nature is not the less if we are content to see her through the veil that she has devised to enhance her charms by the aid of mystery. To tear the veil is not the function of art, which is concerned only with appearances, and, unlike science, need not curiously examine actualities.

Another reason for the value of simplification is that if we fix our eyes on a point of interest in any scene, the surrounding objects cannot possibly be well-defined to our vision; we cannot focus everything at once, and must be content with a single focus. There is the danger of simplifying without understanding, but this will be avoided if the student remembers that though he may simplify he must always suggest, and that he cannot convey his meaning unless it is clear to himself. There is the danger of uninteresting flatness, but a tone is never uninteresting if it is correct; and it is always possible to avoid monotony by a less uncompromising process of generalization. Excessive vagueness is a danger, but this only means that the simplifying has not been done with discrimination, that the needful emphasis has been neglected, and that the idea of graduated definition is absent. It is no more desirable to have extreme vagueness all over a picture than extreme definition; it would be the converse of Pre-Raphaelitism. Ruskin says: "Negligence is only noble when it is, as Fuseli hath it, 'the shadow of energy.'"

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

The watching figure at the window is a subject that has attracted many painters, partly on account of its sentiment, and partly by the effect of light that it affords. There is no reason why a theme should be rejected because it has been illustrated by others, for every one who treats his work in an individual way can bring something fresh to bear on it. Mr. J. Cruwys Richards, indeed, has dealt with the subject in a poetical way in "Anxiety," and I, for one, am glad that he was not deterred by the thought that he was on trodden ground. His picture is a remarkable study of light and shade, strengthened by the dominating importance that has been given to the highest light and by the simple treatment of the well-observed shadows. The direction and soft quality of the light, and the strength of the interior shadows show that it is the last gleam of daylight that is entering the cottage. It is noteworthy, also, how cleverly the emphasis is thrown on the watching figure, not only by the influence of the light, but by the broad and simple treatment of the woman in front. Yet this figure is remarkably expressive, and conveys a sense of patient anxiety in quite a striking way.

Perhaps it will not be so readily noted that a most difficult artistic feat has been achieved in making the emphasized figure go back in aerial perspective, while that which has been so thoroughly simplified comes into place well in front of the picture. It is not surprising that so many fail on this point, and not among photographers alone,

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for it is one that demands a very skilful adjustment of tone in conjunction with breadth of treatment. The sense of atmosphere in the room is aided by a subtle perception of tone, which is especially manifest in the white apron in shadow and the dress of the woman at the window, and some interesting lines are to be observed in the composition. I am particularly impressed by the feeling that has been imparted in so reserved a fashion to the foreground figure, with her head silhouetted against the light, but the sentiment of the picture speaks for itself and requires no enforcing.

The work undoubtedly shows a strong individual feeling and marked pictorial completeness in the composition of line, the arrangement of light, and the forcible expression of the idea, notwithstanding the extraordinary simplicity and economy of treatment; and it is a notable example of how the omission of irrelevances gives strength. The foreground might have been decorated with still life, typical of the accessories of a cottage-home, but such things would only have diverted attention from the main idea—the outlook from gloom and foreboding to light and hope.

What to leave out of a landscape is often one of the most puzzling problems that the artist has to solve, and the more sensitive he is to the beauty that surrounds him, the more painful becomes the duty that he knows he must fulfil of ignoring some of the fascinating life that modestly or vociferously beckons his attention. In one way it is a great help to regard everything in Nature as alive, a conception justified by the scientific dictum that atoms are in perpetual movement, and one that



ANXIETY

By J. CRUWYS RICHARDS

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

enforces the expressiveness of so-called inanimate objects, and so tends to obviate dullness in a picture. But this standpoint only intensifies the regret at the ruthless abandonment of silent things that have made their appeal and convinced us of their charm. Yet art is, and must always be, a story of sacrifice, and unless these claimants on our sympathy can show their usefulness to the end that we have in view, their call may be callously disregarded—or perhaps noted for response on a more appropriate occasion. We must harden our hearts; for if we give way to these charmers the result is bewilderment and diversion from our main purpose.

When this purpose has definitely fixed itself in the mind, selection becomes not only a possibility but a necessity, since among the many appellants there must certainly be some that will harmonize with the conception and contribute to the richness and effect of the scheme by an augmentation of its vitality and interest. The successful claimants are, however, inevitably few in comparison with the great mass of those to be rejected. The question is—what process of sifting should be adopted?

Suppose one is contemplating a peaceful sunset over the river; a little weir with its summit edged by golden light, below it the swirl of ripples and foam continually murmuring an accompaniment, and the whole scene in a leafy setting. Something induces a mood. Birds may be singing—one scarcely knows, for everything seems to be singing. Perceptions are deliciously stirred in unison with each other and with the surroundings. One longs to reproduce the scene, and to perpetuate the sensations. This impulse leads to a more careful ex-

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amination, and one notices a multitude of reflected lights, many boulders in the path of the rushing water, wild flowers and willows on the bank, some rushes that have found a haven away from the violence of the stream, distant foliage that takes an atmospheric tone, and much more that calls for appreciative consideration, for all these things seem to combine to produce the enchanting effect. A fisherman stands in a punt, but not quite in the direct line of vision, so one moves a little to get a better view of him, and observes that, seen against the light, he certainly makes an effective point of emphasis, and serves to give a human interest to the scene. So one thing after another is considered, one or more points of view chosen, and plates are exposed.

But when the result is examined, where is the delightful mood that first impelled the making of the picture? It is pretty, no doubt, but it was bound to be so, for the scene itself was pretty. There was, however, another quality, an elusive something, which seemed to pervade the moment like a strain of music.

The turbulent water seemed a source of harmonious sound rather than an agent of restlessness and turmoil. It was an expression of the music that no more disturbs the peace of Nature than the swell of an organ interferes with the solemnity of a cathedral; and peace and solemnity alike may gain a magical enhancement from such sounds. So much depends on the mood and the circumstances. On a stormy day the falling water might help the feeling of unrest; but here it seems an indispensable accompaniment to the sense of repose.

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

Such a reflection may give the clue to the missing essence, the harmonious blending of light and sound that is sought, and then comes the question how the photographer may recover it in preparing his print.

He has everything registered on his plate, but the subtle quality that makes the sentiment of the scene is lost in a crowd of facts; very pleasant facts, but so abundant and conspicuous that a merely fanciful impression has little chance of gaining prominence among them.

Evidently, therefore, the first thing to be done is to suppress a large proportion of the lively gathering; but this is scarcely to be accomplished in a wholesale way, lest the individual whose assistance is specially needed may happen to be among those rejected. The details will be separately considered in relation to the sentiment, and it will at once be seen that the fisherman is not wanted. The "human interest" that seemed for a moment to have attraction, is not in the spirit of the theme, and the angular lines formed by the punt, and by the upstanding figure, do not accord with the rhythmic curves that are essential to the desired effect. The fisherman would be a source of conflicting interest, and therefore he is condemned. Of course the wary photographer has not neglected to provide another negative in which the angler does not appear.

Among the boulders, rushes, trees, and wild growths on the bank, there will be lines that will add to the sense of rhythm, so that with the dominating chord of the high light on the top of the weir, resolved by the minor lights and curves in the eddying water, the composition may

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partake of a musical form. From this point of view it should not be difficult to determine which of the objects that the camera has registered will help or hinder the harmony of line. This would be constituted by wide curves in the foreground formed by the moving water, and accentuated by large stones in the shallow bed, by smaller curves of the foam further on, and by the slightly bent lines of the water as it falls over the weir. The dominating mass of reflected light should be kept in harmonious form, and the surrounding foliage and distance be made appropriate but unobtrusive in design.

Thus with a definite idea of what he wants and consequently with an instant recognition of what is unnecessary and a hindrance, the artist may proceed confidently with the work of selection. But he not only has to reject that which breaks or interferes with the sweep of line; there are other matters to consider, and one of the most important is tone. The sentiment of the sunset hour will always be kept in view, in combination with the individual mood, which, with all the turmoil of water, was essentially one of rest, enriched by the music of Nature and her glow of colour. Tone, therefore, has a significant part in the rendering; it suggests the colour and conveys the atmosphere of the place. Among the multitude of things that the camera has represented there are those that do not help to suggest colour or atmosphere. Some have dark accents or strong lights that break the soft harmony of the effect, and these may be at once eliminated, unless they are required for some other purpose such as the assistance they give to the line, in which case they may be so modified

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

that while doing their duty in one direction they may not counterbalance their usefulness by errors in another. If a restful tone pervaded by a general sense of colour is to contribute to a harmonious impression, there can be nothing obtrusive, so anything that tends to be conspicuous will be regarded with suspicion, whatever its allurements, and will not be accepted until its value has been put to the test.

So the music of Nature will be heard through a quiet atmosphere. The light is, as always, the soul of the scene, the cause of colour and the determining factor of tone, and should be the measure of everything comprised in the composition. All the gradations, from the most brilliant light to the darkest shadow, will need vigilant attention. Especially is it necessary that no lights be allowed to compete with the principal one. There will be secondary lights that will carry on the motif of the chief one, not without subtle variations of the melody, but with diminished force ; and there will be still dimmer lights that will faintly echo the strain. Half-tones and shadows will give effect to the lights by their contrast, but there will be no forcible contrasts, for they would destroy the sentiment. All aggressive lights and sombre shadows will be discarded, for the scene calls for delicate harmonies, not for sensational flourishes.

There are other things to be rejected—forms and tones that interfere with the plane of the water (for however ruffled its surface, the flatness of its plane must be kept in view); objects that prevent a simple statement of the message, or compete with the point of emphasis. Some of these details may be made more suggestive by

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skilful treatment if it is carried out with a due regard for the position they occupy, so that nothing clamorous may interfere with the pervading rhythm and harmony. If conceived and carried out with this end in view the work may be something more than a record of fact, and may preserve a reflection of the intangible quality that was at the origin of its being.

AN ELUSIVE QUALITY

Tone is an elusive quality. Indeed, if any one sets himself to find a categorical answer to the question, What is Tone? he will probably find that he has undertaken a more difficult task than he anticipated. The word is employed in reference to the standard of social intercourse, to the sound of a musical instrument or the human voice, to the quality of a literary production or a dramatic performance, and in all these instances a good tone is a mark of distinction—something that is felt, even though it be not defined, as a characteristic far removed from the commonplace. You may recognize what you had not dreamed was within the scope of earthly music in the inflections of an old violin, and you may see colour harmonies that surpass the imagination in an Old Master. It would seem that good tone is a something different from, and better than, what is generally familiar, and a something that, once appreciated, must inevitably be accepted as right.

In order to narrow the inquiry, there may be



NUIT IMMINENTE.

By E. G. HORRE.

AN ELUSIVE QUALITY

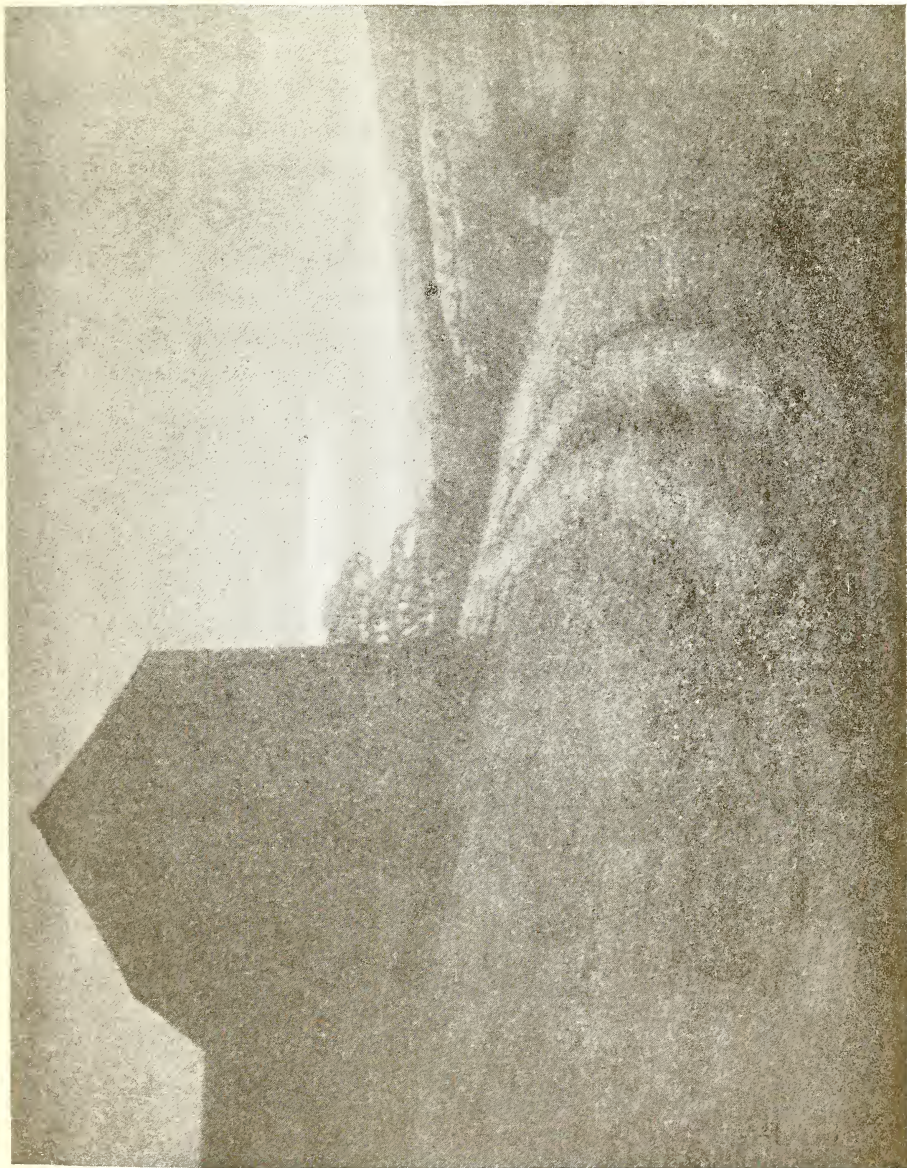
some practical use in approaching the matter from its negative side, so that we may understand, in the first place, what tone is not. Perhaps the light that penetrates the negative may reveal the positive. Tone, then, is the negation of all that is vulgar and blatant, the conscientious objector to that which is screaming and assertive, the suppressor of discord and disorder. It follows, therefore, that in order to achieve tone we must be careful to eliminate all those elements of which it is the foe.

It may be said that what one considers vulgar and blatant another may think characteristic or humorous, and that it is all a question of temperament and the point of view. This, in fact, is a legitimate argument; but when the temperament and the point of view of the artist come into play they reveal the degree of his appreciation of tone. I remember a picture of an interior, with the figures, the mantel-piece, and its ornaments, the book-shelves, the old china, and the prints on the wall, all represented with the utmost simplicity and severity. Everything was in tone, and all the accessories helped to convey the suggestion of home life, permeated by a high degree of refinement and culture. If there had been anything out of key, if prominence had been given to the details of any piece of furniture or ornament, it would have at once become intrusive, and its suppression would inevitably have been demanded by any one who appreciated tone. Anything that asserts itself to the detriment of interest in the whole scheme must necessarily destroy its tone. It is as if a foolishly conceited person monopolized the conversation in a refined circle.

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Now, if it may be taken that the antithesis of tone is that which, by its insistence, destroys the balance, harmony, and underlying motive of a work of art, we may reason that tone itself is a quality that helps to promote the poetry of things. Thus sins against tone very often result from the elaboration of small things which arrest attention that ought to be given to the sentiment of the work. One may emphasize this by a reference to architecture, for if great elaboration and accentuation are given to portions of a building that are not essential to structure—magnificent columns, for instance, supporting nothing that demands their strength—it is impossible to appreciate the poise, solidity, and homogeneity that constitute so much of the impressiveness of a fine edifice.

But I am talking here of tone in a sense somewhat different from that in which the word is generally understood. The word is associated with qualities of atmosphere, and this brings me to the reflection that Nature is always in tone. Everything is in sympathetic relationship, and the sky dominates the whole. Its influence is acknowledged by the grass, and this again reflects some of its colour on the grazing cattle or sheep. Reflected light influences shadow, and reflected colour influences local colour. All this interchange goes to make up the tone of Nature. Things do not stand alone; they are a part of a scheme, and help to illustrate the underlying harmony of Nature, which is seen through an atmosphere that softens and brings everything together, and if we can appreciate the effect of this atmosphere, we shall certainly have gone far towards the achievement



THE ROAD TO THE FARM

BY M. ARBUTHNOT

AN ELUSIVE QUALITY

of tone. The untrained eye may see the details of Nature, and miss her pervading tone; the eye of the artist should see her tone first, and all her incidents in relation to its influence.

A strangely simple, suggestive, and decorative composition is Mr. E. O. Hoppe's "Nuit Imminente," confessedly a reminiscence of Japanese design. The picture seems to me chiefly noteworthy as a study of atmospheric tone in which the suggestion of twilight is delicately conveyed in the landscape, the sky, and the projecting bough. It is instructive, too, as an example of how much is to be accomplished by very simple means; for the horizon looks very far away and there is a sense of mystery and immensity in the sky, while the bough fulfils a decorative purpose and also serves to give distance to the remainder. The tone is remarkably good, and for this reason, quiet and unforced as the picture is, it does not miss its effect.

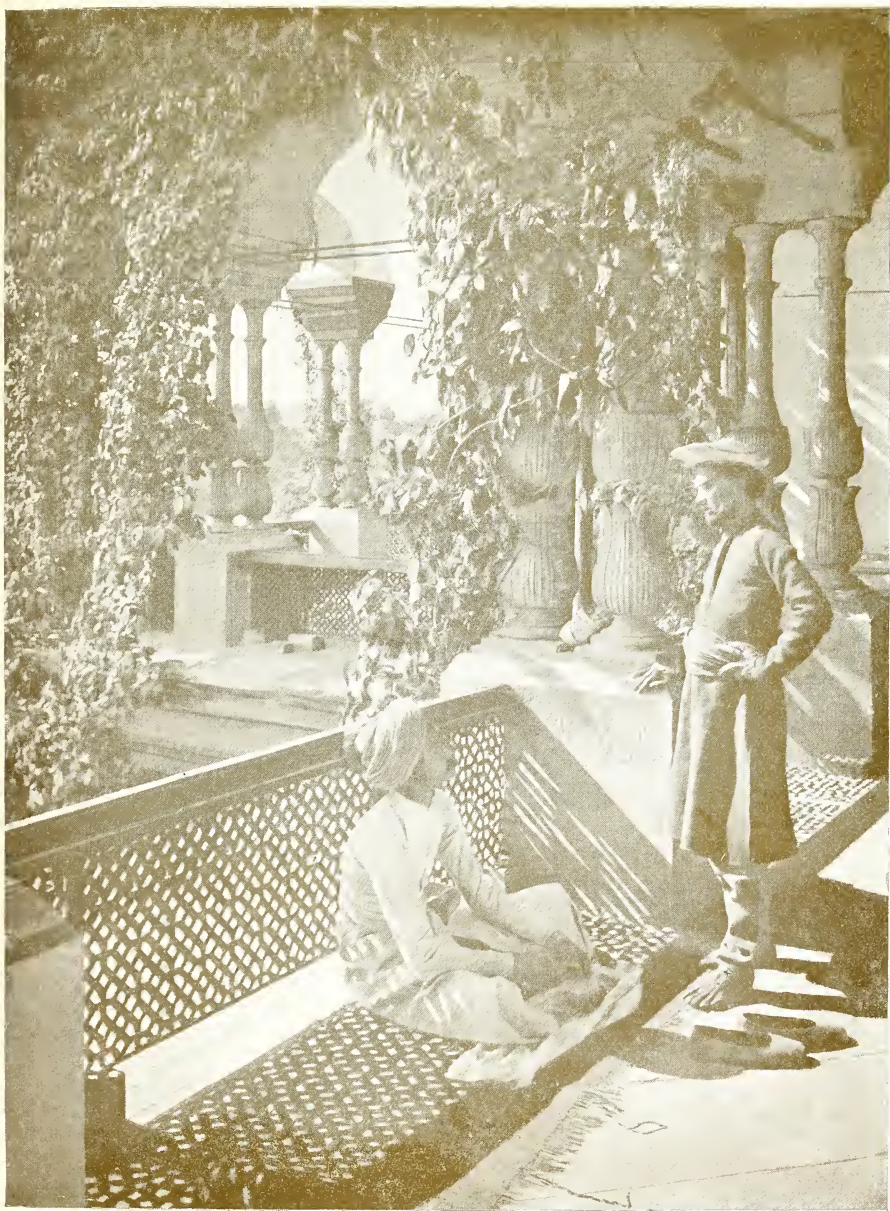
As twilight approaches details become more vague, and it is at this hour that the best opportunity is offered of studying the broad effects of light and tone. The elaborate definition of separate objects can no longer hold out any temptation, for Nature manifests her larger aspect and conceals her minor charms. Hence accuracy of tone is the only means by which the artist may succeed, and this is exemplified by Mr. M. Arbuthnot in "The Road to the Farm." The softness of the light, the delicate tone of the sky, and the carefully rendered range of values from the foreground to the distance are what give this apparently simple, but really very subtle, study its primary interest. The bold curve of the road is very useful to the lines of the composition, and also to the aerial per-

ART AND THE CAMERA

spective in so effectively bringing the front part of the picture away from the distance; but the work is chiefly valuable as an example of what may be done purely by tone. Its mystery, poetry, and tender effect of light would all be lost if the tones were incorrect, or if there had been any introduction of sharp definition.

Evidently the ordinary "button-presser," who merely seeks a record of places that he has visited, can attain no such qualities. But if he is gifted with a certain amount of artistic perception, and wishes to give effect to it in producing his prints, he need not despair. He may not do great things at first, but if he gains a conception of tone, and makes it his aim to arrive at this quality, he will be on a safe road to advancement.

There is another aspect of tone that I have not yet touched on. This has relation to the degree of intensity or modification of the pigment employed. Thus, positive colour is not tone. We speak of colours being "toned down," a legitimate phrase that carries its own meaning. In this sense tone is a quality that softens, refines, and gives mystery or poetry to a work of art. It is the painter's means of obtaining suggestion and distinction, the reverse of crudity and assertive statement. In monochrome it is concerned with subtle gradations of gray, and will have nothing to do with absolute black or absolute white. I wish specially to draw attention to this aspect of tone, because I have observed that photographers are not infrequently tempted to make free use of black in the "bold" representation of shadows. But shadows may be bold without being black. In any case, such generous indulgence in black is destruc-



PLAY OF SUNLIGHT, LUCKNOW

By E. R. ASHTON

AN ELUSIVE QUALITY

tive of tone. The use of white is a different matter, for the very good reason that absolute white cannot be obtained.

But the problem of bringing white into its correct tone is most difficult. When this is achieved, the most delicate and charming results are obtained, and for these reasons I think that to work in monochrome on toned paper is to shirk one of the greatest difficulties, and at the same time to miss some of the most subtle beauties of pictorial art.

If your highest light is a gray or a light brown, your whole key is so lowered and your scale so reduced that you may be brought down to dead black for the representation of shadows that might otherwise be interesting and transparent.

Some think to drive their statement home by the aid of a vigorous contrast, and may go to the length of representing a lily with a black background to enforce the whiteness of the flower. But for a picture to excite pleasing emotions and to claim recurrent attention, harmonies, not contrasts, are required. Contrasts astonish, but only for a moment, and when the surprise has subsided, there is no insinuating and lasting appeal such as is found in a quiet design that the eye can rest on. If there are violent contrasts of light and shadow, their clamour is very likely to drown instead of strengthening the original inspiration. It may be said that the whole idea is to render the effect of a brilliant light against a dark shadow; but, even so, it will be found necessary to modify the contrast, for the light has colour and the shadow has mystery, and these qualities, further influenced by atmosphere, are not to be obtained through mere black and white. They demand tone. The lily

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may be in sunlight, and the black fence behind it in shadow, but neither can escape the harmonizing veil of atmosphere and reflected colour. Nature's contrasts, though it may sound paradoxical, are all harmonies; in fact she works for harmony, and those in sympathy with her will aid her effort, and not endeavour to force her into unusual contrasts of light and shade.

If Whistler said that there was nothing darker than cobalt-blue out of doors, and was laughed at accordingly by old-fashioned painters, my readers may, at least, confidently refrain from making their shadows black. In truth, anything like heaviness of tone is fatal to the delicacy that pervades open-air scenes in daylight.

In "A Play of Sunlight, Lucknow," Mr. E. R. Ashton has produced a telling design that forcibly illustrates not only the beauty of Oriental building but also the intense glow of the Indian sun. The work has interest and beauty that make their own appeal, and need not be described; but it also has an educational value. This is in the treatment of the light. Such a blaze of sunshine is scarcely to be met with in England, yet it should be noticed that its effect is rendered with no great contrast of tone, certainly not more than would be required for English sunlight. Now the idea is very prevalent among amateurs who have not advanced very far towards pictorial proficiency that a strong light is only to be expressed by the contrast of very dark shadows, consequently when they want to make their sunlight brilliant they are very apt to go to the extremity of white in the lights and black in the shadows. In this case there is neither one nor the other, yet the light is of extraordinary



IN THE JASMINE TOWER, AGRA

By E. R. ASHTON

AN ELUSIVE QUALITY

brilliance. The explanation of course is that where there is strong light there is also strong reflected light, and if the shadows do not show the influence of reflected light the effect of the direct light is diminished instead of being intensified.

A similar lesson is to be gleaned from Mr. Ashton's "In the Jasmine Tower, Agra," for here, while one feels the blinding glare of the sunlight on the pavement, one notices that the tones of the walls in shadow are not so very dark in contrast. This picture, however, will probably interest most readers by its beautiful architectural details. The ornamentation is most delicately rendered, and the picturesque figure is admirably placed to give interest and emphasis to the composition. But apart from their beauty these two pictures serve a most valuable purpose as an argument against the introduction of violent contrasts into pictures. If they are not wanted here to give effect to the burning sun of India, how can they be necessary in the gentle light of England? It may be said that the light colour of the stonework renders such a contrast impossible. Against that we have the swarthy face of the Hindoo that forms a dark accent very usefully placed; but even this is a long way from black.

Tone is a quality that comes specially within the range of the photographer, for his medium, in the many forms that it takes, lends itself to a wonderful variety of textures and gradations, and it is very important that he should make the best use of the advantages that are conspicuously available. Photography can be forcible, subtle, or dainty, and in my view its possibilities of tone constitute its greatest recommendation for artistic purposes, for

ART AND THE CAMERA

tone will impart impressiveness and beauty to any picture, whether a photograph or a painting.

An effect of light, in which the declining sun loses some of its power in penetrating the smoky atmosphere of London, but retains enough force to enliven the river, is "The Tate Gallery," by Mr. Blake. The effect of this work is due to his realization that light and atmosphere are the soul of picture-making, and are worth representing for their own sake. If any one complains that the gallery is ungenerously treated, and that the details of the temporary bridge that did duty during building of the present structure at Vauxhall are dimly presented, I would point out that notwithstanding its title this is not a picture of architecture or of engineering work, for such matters have been sacrificed to a desire to capture the essence of a characteristic moment, and Mr. Blake has preferred mystery and suggestion to definite statement. On the other hand he is able to present a remarkably interesting and broadly-treated study of tone, in which the gleam of sunlight on the water is boldly and effectively rendered, with some excellent modelling that brings the front of the picture right away from the distant building. The characteristics of the bridge and the gallery as half revealed in aerial perspective are present, but on the whole he has preferred the shimmering touch of Nature to the uncompromising handiwork of man. Some may say—Why not have both? But you cannot serve two masters, at least not equally well, in the same picture.



THE TATE GALLERY

By A. H. BLAKE

SUGGESTION OF COLOUR

How to translate colour is a problem that continually besets the photographer and every other exponent of black and white. Colour, like light, atmosphere, and space, is everywhere; so long as the eyes can see anything at all they can see this pervading attribute of Nature, and no less than the others just mentioned it calls for constant attention. Still, there is the difference that colour, at least from the artistic point of view, is made up of light and atmosphere, and is not therefore a primary, but a secondary matter. So it follows that if the light and atmosphere of a picture are correct the colour cannot be absolutely wrong, though it may miss some of the finesse and suggestiveness that belong to it when it is dealt with on its own account. Some workers in black and white see to their illumination and aerial perspective, leaving the colour to take care of itself, and there is no denying that this may be done with a considerable measure of success, particularly where the colour is not of special attraction. But the advantages of studying colour are that a means is thereby obtained of checking the effect of light and atmosphere, and that an element of variety and vivacity is imported. What makes the subject of supreme importance to the photographer is that it is a point on which the camera notoriously fails; the isochromatic plate is not to be relied on so completely as a sensitive human vision.

In endeavouring to offer a suggestion as to the rendering of colour I would first lay stress on its

ART AND THE CAMERA

subjection to light and atmosphere. Light intensifies colour; atmosphere modifies it. There are thus continually two influences at work, in a sense opposing influences, and it is through their combined or competing efforts—whichever way we regard them—that colour obtains its quality, variety, and mystery.

If the light is strong enough to overcome the effect of atmosphere, as when an object is seen in sunlight near at hand, the colour becomes very rich and brilliant; but if seen through a veil of atmosphere, the colour becomes indefinite—moreover, the colour of the atmosphere being blue, the more tendency there is as distance increases for objects to lose their warmth of tone and to merge with the atmosphere. There is another curious influence on colour, that of colour itself; for all colours affect other colours in various degrees, the complementary shades particularly so. If, for instance, you see a soldier in scarlet against a green background, the effect of the scarlet is heightened while the green loses something of its power; or if a vase of yellow flowers is placed in front of a purple curtain, the yellow becomes very intense, but you are scarcely aware of the purple. In these cases the secondary tints seem to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the primary, but it is not always so, for if we put blue and orange together the orange will probably “kill” the blue. The warm colours, in fact, strike the eye more forcibly than the cold ones, and this is one of the considerations that should be kept in view.

The subject, however, is complicated, and for the simplification of this argument the colours may very well be divided into two sections, warm and



AT SUNSET UNDER THE FIVE SISTERS,
YORK MINSTER

Therick H. Mann

SUGGESTION OF COLOUR

cold, or, to be more precise, those in which red and yellow predominate on one hand, and those in which blue predominates on the other. This will be found a very useful division; it is Nature's arrangement of sunlight and shadow, and it also accords in a general way with her scheme of accents and backgrounds—at least in this country, where one finds the cold colours, blue, purple, and green in the sky, the sea, the grass, the trees, and the distant hills, while the warm colours are seen in the human skin, cattle, and other animals and most of the flowers. The warmly-coloured things are the most conspicuous; the others occupy the larger space, but there are various exceptions, giving unexpected shades and touches that tend to diversify the scheme as a whole.

Monochrome cannot, of course, be expected to suggest all the hues that are seen; sometimes they have to be generalized, but a tempting effect of colour may be so translated into tone as to convey a somewhat similar sensation to that which has been experienced. One who, as a general practice, schools himself to feel the difference between warm and cool colour will inevitably convey something of it in his work, which will become more interesting and diversified in consequence. This must be evident to any one who considers how much tamer his picture would be if he treated, for instance, red and green with the same feeling.

If the warmer colours are the more conspicuous, the cooler ones are the more tender, and if this is remembered it will be a safeguard against many common defects, such as the uncompromising representation of distant objects, clouds, and shadows, and it will often have the effect of

ART AND THE CAMERA

causing emphasis to be reserved for the special point in which it is required. Also the reflected colour of the sky, which always pervades a landscape, may meet with recognition. A little more tenderness and reserve in some places and a little more force and decision in others have a wonderfully enlivening effect, and, if judiciously applied to that end, help to impart a general sense of colour, even if one cannot say precisely what colours are intended.

Some colours seem to glow with light and others are correspondingly dull; surely it is worth while to note qualities of this sort. But it has to be remembered all the while that the colour indications take a secondary place to the main scheme of light. Another useful outcome of the study of colour is that it promotes an appreciative treatment of objects that are apparently black or white, for nothing is really black or white in Nature, the strongest darks are full of rich colour, and the highest light obtainable, that of bright sunlight, is especially tinged by a warm glow. Thus there is good reason for objecting to absolute black in a picture. But one need not be frightened of showing a white surface, because it always takes colour from its surroundings wherever it may be placed, and is never, in fact, absolutely white.

In connection with the subject it may be well to advise an avoidance of the seductions of colour photography, which cannot be recommended in its present stage of development on account of the impurity of the pigments available. All colours being obtained through the various combinations of the three primaries—red, blue, and yellow—it follows that these must be above suspicion if the

SUNSET

tints that are made from them are to have the quality and brilliance that a sensitive eye demands. Unfortunately this condition has not yet been established. Probably the need of great transparency for the overlaying of tints in the three-colour process has been an obstacle. It is a pity that this attractive field is at present practically closed to the photographer. No doubt science will find a way, and meanwhile there is plenty to be done in black-and-white; but a good understanding of colour is requisite to its translation into tone.

SUNSET

Doubtless the most poetical of the works by Mr. E. R. Ashton that I have been able to include in this volume will be recognized as his "Evening near the Pyramids," which conveys the sense of bigness that is always so valuable an achievement, causing one to forget the narrow limits of the border and to feel something of the expanse of the scene. A landscape taken in the East is not to be judged quite on the same ground as one of English scenery, for the transparency of the atmosphere causes distant objects to seem nearer than they are, and it is thus the more to the artist's credit that he has enabled the eye to wander so far into the present picture. A very appropriate moment has been chosen, when the sun was temporarily obscured, for it would otherwise have been impossible to obtain so soft an effect and to render so much of the peace and mystery of the scene. It is worth

ART AND THE CAMERA

while to note that these qualities are always greatly aided by still water, and the water plays so important a part in this instance that one ought to note the success with which it has been treated. This is in a great measure due to the reserve exercised in the reflections, these being subsidiary to the flat plane of the water, which is of main importance. The composition is well balanced and pleasing, and there is a pervading sense of colour that gives richness to the whole effect. The dignity and majesty of the scene have been felt and are therefore conveyed to the beholder, though the picture suffers particularly by reduction.

It need not be thought that sunset effects, with all their wealth of colour, are entirely the province of the painter, for within the limitations of black-and-white there is plenty of work of a peculiarly instructive character to undertake. The photographer has here a certain advantage, for the colour is continually changing, and those who pursue it with palette and brush may well be bewildered by the rapidity of the transformation.

Lights and shadows are full of entrancing colour. The well-defined shades of noon have slowly but surely undergone an alteration until they have assumed the familiar characteristics that distinguish them at sunset. It is necessary to understand the nature of this imperceptible change. The shadows are lengthening, you will say, and that is true enough, but still more important modifications are going on. From noon to sunset the sun gradually loses his power, just as from sunrise to noon it is gradually increasing. This loss of power results from the more oblique incidence of the rays, and



EVENING NEAR THE PYRAMIDS

BY E. R. ASHTON

SUNSET

the lengthening shadows from the same cause. With the weakening of the light there is a diminution also of the contrast between light and shadow. This is a matter that touches the worker in black-and-white. The painter can always mark the contrast of sunlight and shadow by means of colour. The light remains warm and the shadow cool, though the colour scheme, of which the complementaries orange and blue are the foundation, grows more modified as the day goes on. But the monochrome man has no such assistance, and it is therefore necessary that by accuracy of tone and values he should arrive at suggesting what the painter can attain. On the whole, perhaps, the task of the worker without colour demands the keener perception, and it is the more desirable that he should miss none of the indications that are within the scope of his medium. The contrast of light and shade gradually grows weaker, until it disappears altogether when the sun passes the horizon. In other words, shadows grow less dark and lights less brilliant until they merge and become as one.

The sky demands careful attention, and I wish to emphasize this as a hint to any inexperienced photographer who may venture to combine the sky of one negative with the landscape of another. The changes of the sky proceed harmoniously with those of the landscape. For the sake of simplicity consider a clear blue sky. At noon a deep blue—not a pure ultramarine, as novelists are apt to call it, but a blue in tone, modified by atmosphere and the character of the light.

This deep-toned sky is reflected in the shadows, consequently we have here the strongest contrast

ART AND THE CAMERA

between sunlight and shade. But as the sun begins to decline the sky grows lighter, the shadows also grow lighter, and there is less brilliance but more richness of colour in the lights. Thus natural causes work in concert. The declining sun casts weaker shadows, and these, reflecting a lighter sky, are still further diminished in force. The sun that sends his rays obliquely over the earth also sends them obliquely across the sky, and so, while the illumination of the earth is less, the illumination of the sky is comparatively greater. Thus it happens that there is still light in the sky when the earth has become almost dark.

So, when the sun is setting, the long shadows must be very delicate; the tone must be greatly influenced by the appearance of the sky, and the lights on earth cannot be brilliant, though there may be brilliance in the lights of the sky. There is much to interest the worker in black-and-white at the time of sunset, even though he feel the colour effect beyond him. The long, delicately toned shadows are often an aid to pleasing composition, and the slanting rays of the sun, that perhaps catch the tree tops and far away illuminate a mass of cloud, leaving the landscape in a broad half-tone, induce a sense of mystery and poetry. The shadow-side of clouds should always be noted, the shadow being, of course, on the side farthest from the earth when the sun is level with the horizon.

At such a time there is an opportunity to show what can be done by mere tone. Soft, filmy shades may suggest the colour of the sky, the clouds must be kept delicate, for be it always remembered that they are the most distant of objects; stronger tones will suggest the foreground in broad masses

SUNSET

and without much detail, and there will be a gradual diminution of force until we come perhaps to far-away hills softly illuminated; while foreground lights must not be brilliant enough, and foreground shadow must not be dark enough to diminish the suggestion of colour.

White has disappeared—it never existed in absolute purity, but now its absence is very marked. A white cow may be gray-green, pink, or violet, according to the portion of the sky that she reflects. Black does not exist, nor is there any positive colour, unless it be in objects whose local hues are similar to the light that they reflect. A rose, for instance, turned towards a rosy light will glow with an intensity that seems almost unnatural. Grass and trees are scarcely green in such a light, and the shadows that fall on them are far from being so—more likely they will be an indefinite violet. Shadows generally are apt to partake of a uniformity of tone in which local colour is all but lost, and objects that catch the direct rays of the sun assume a colour far different from that of full daylight.

The illumination so often apparent in the eastern sky is more or less reflected in earthly shadows, and for this reason we may sometimes observe a strange, mysterious effect where there is a pervading glow of light and no shadows are apparent. No doubt most of my readers have at some time or other seen such a phenomenon, which is not uncommon, and results from the strong reflection of light in the sky opposite the sun. Sunset effects, however, are very various, and it is more useful to understand the general principles of their light, shade, and colour than it is closely

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to examine any particular example. But it is important that photographers should remember that in such effects colour cannot be neglected, for it is an essential factor. They are called on to suggest colour in monochrome—the colour of light (for as the light wanes its colour becomes more pronounced), and the colour of the shadows that partly reflect and partly contrast with the lights, thus making a subtle harmony. Such colours cannot be suggested unless they are observed and felt. But no one need be discouraged. The main effect of light is the thing to be thought of first, and such modifications as are made for the sake of colour must be introduced with much tenderness and reserve. Only very slight alterations are needed—a sensation of the glow of warm colours, a hint of the restfulness of cool ones.

In any case there is much to stimulate the observation in exercises of this sort, and those who practise the translation of sunset effects into monochrome are certain to develop a more lively appreciation of colour, and a desire for its closer study, that cannot fail to be of the greatest value.

THE SKY

The association of landscape and sky is of the closest, and it may be said that the principles that apply to one are appropriate also to the other. Sky has its linear and aerial perspective, and it takes an important part in composition when the lines and masses of clouds are used in co-opera-

THE SKY

tion with those of nearer objects. The study of values is especially necessary in respect of the sky, so that it may appear both luminous and distant—not an easy combination to achieve. The sky does not, as a rule, furnish the point of emphasis, but occasionally it does so, notably in twilight effects when earthly things become misty, and a last gleam in the clouds above the horizon is the one thing that holds the vision. In such a case the study of values, aerial perspective, and tone, required to make the foreground advance and the high light take its far-away position, is one of no little difficulty. The great difference between earth and sky is that one is solid and near, the other is filmy and distant. This distinction at once suggests the opposite modes of treatment that are necessary to give effect to such essential characteristics. Hard lines, clear definition, strength of tone, and other attributes of solidity are obviously inadmissible in a sky; yet the nearer part of the sky should come forward, no less than the foreground below, and this is accomplished by a gradual strengthening of tone through aerial perspective. It should be borne in mind that the sky has drawing, for this is just the place where it is generally neglected. The vault of heaven should be treated as such, and the perspective of the arc should be felt in the clouds.

A landscape is always dominated by the sky, which makes its influence felt in lights and shadows and in every colour. Water is not the only reflecting surface; everything in some degree reflects, though some things only do so in a very slight degree, and the student need never fear to bring down the colour of his sky, and so to permeate

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his work by an element of harmony that is in close alliance with atmosphere.

Mr. A. Horsley Hinton's fine landscape, "Melton Meadows," may be commended to the attention of the amateur as conveying a variety of very useful lessons.

In the first place attention may be directed to the composition, of which the remarkably graceful and dignified line formed by the tall trees, and proceeding thence to the distance, may be taken as the leading motive, echoed, though not exactly repeated, in the reflection. It is a good beginning to have a line like this as the basis of one's design; one may build with confidence on such a foundation, and when the emphasis has been fixed on the two commanding trees, something of a picture already exists. The use of light for the purpose of obtaining this emphasis is a matter of importance, and one that is not without difficulty, for the light, coming against a shadow, must not be too brilliant, otherwise the contrast would be too forcible, with the result that the trees would come forward. It will be noted that, though the light is sufficiently emphatic, it is far from white, while the shadow is deep and atmospheric, but a long way from black. This makes one of those touches of artistic judgement that are often overlooked, simply because they are so right; but a little more light or a little darker shadow, and it would at once be felt that there was something wrong. In the treatment of the foliage there is simplicity combined with suggestion, so that one feels the forms of the trees in a mass of atmospheric tone that gradually gets more delicate as the distance increases. The treat-



MELTON MEADOWS

By A. HORSLEY HINTON

“FROZEN MUSIC”

ment of the reflection is instructive because, in consequence of its breadth and delicacy, one is never able to forget the surface of the water. An excellent feature of the work is the tone of the sky. One can feel that it is charged with moisture, and it is curious how the high light on the bank aids the idea that the fleeting brightness of the scene is about to disappear under a summer shower. Most necessary is it to note the perspective of the sky, obtained through a graduated tone from the top of the picture to the distance. The work combines in a marked degree a sympathetic appreciation of the forms and aspects of Nature with a regard for the requirements of art. This by the way sums up the needs of the landscape artist.

“FROZEN MUSIC”

Church interiors are among the subjects that commonly arouse the ambition of photographers, and their pictures, beautiful as they often are, generally fail for a peculiar reason. Admiration of the bold columns, arches, and exquisite traceries is often, when we come to analyse it, more a tribute to the architect than to the photographer. The details are so elaborated that no scope is left for emphasis, and without this how are the mystery and solemnity, so important to the impressiveness of ancient architecture, to be conveyed? Such a state of things is not to be complained of when only a record is intended, but if it is sought to

ART AND THE CAMERA

convey anything of the sentiment that the subjects can inspire the treatment must be very different.

To make a successful picture is the more difficult, because the dilemma has to be faced that beautiful details must be sacrificed to personal feeling, or this must be kept in subjection to the architectural design. It is well to have a definite idea of what one is going about, and not to open fire, so to speak, on any subject that happens to take the fancy without first feeling assured as to the dominating quality that lays hold of the imagination. Cathedrals have so much bewildering variety of light, colour, and detail, such overwhelming solemnity, and so many associations with the past, that, unless one picks out and accentuates the particular phase that appeals to the mood, failure is certain to come through conflicting interests. The seasoned worker knows that he must not attempt too much.

In domestic interiors there is generally one dominant effect of light streaming in at the window, and it will be well to treat this with simplicity, defining only the objects that are in the principal light, merely suggesting others, and generalizing those in shadow. It will usually be found easiest in the matter of treatment, as well as pictorially most effective, to rely on a simple arrangement of light and to exclude cross lights, for these are apt to have a disturbing influence and to interfere with unity of composition. But when we come to church interiors, it is evident that cross lights are an essential characteristic that cannot be neglected, and therefore this kind of work calls for more than ordinary judgement.



IN SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE

Therick H. Mann

“FROZEN MUSIC”

Many people, if asked what was the subject of primary importance, and the one that demanded the artist's first consideration in a cathedral would naturally respond, “The Architecture,” and would no doubt be amused if any one ventured to hint that they were wrong. But if this question were put to me, I should reply, “The Light.” Perhaps it is only a question of individual feeling, but in any case the two points of view are not to be compromised. It is no use thinking that in the treatment of your picture you will give equal importance to the architecture and the light. The architecture is hard and solid, and the light soft and mysterious, and if one tries to accentuate both these qualities, each must suffer.

On entering a cathedral a sentiment of its own seems to be attached to the building, and this feeling is quite different, say in Durham, York, Worcester, and Canterbury. Some may think that the difference is entirely due to styles of architecture, but it arises no less from the play of light, the reflections of stained windows, and the broad effects of shadow that are so different in each case. If one can study and represent those lights, and suggest something of the colour that is carried in the beams across the aisles to illuminate the columns, one may hope to give a suggestion of the sentiment of the building even without conveying all the details of architecture. But is it a fact that the architectural charm is lost in such a process? I think not. Church architecture has its big effects as well as its little details, and its grandeur emerges, its solemnity becomes forcibly emphasized, if we see it broadly, with bright illumination giving glimpses of its character here and

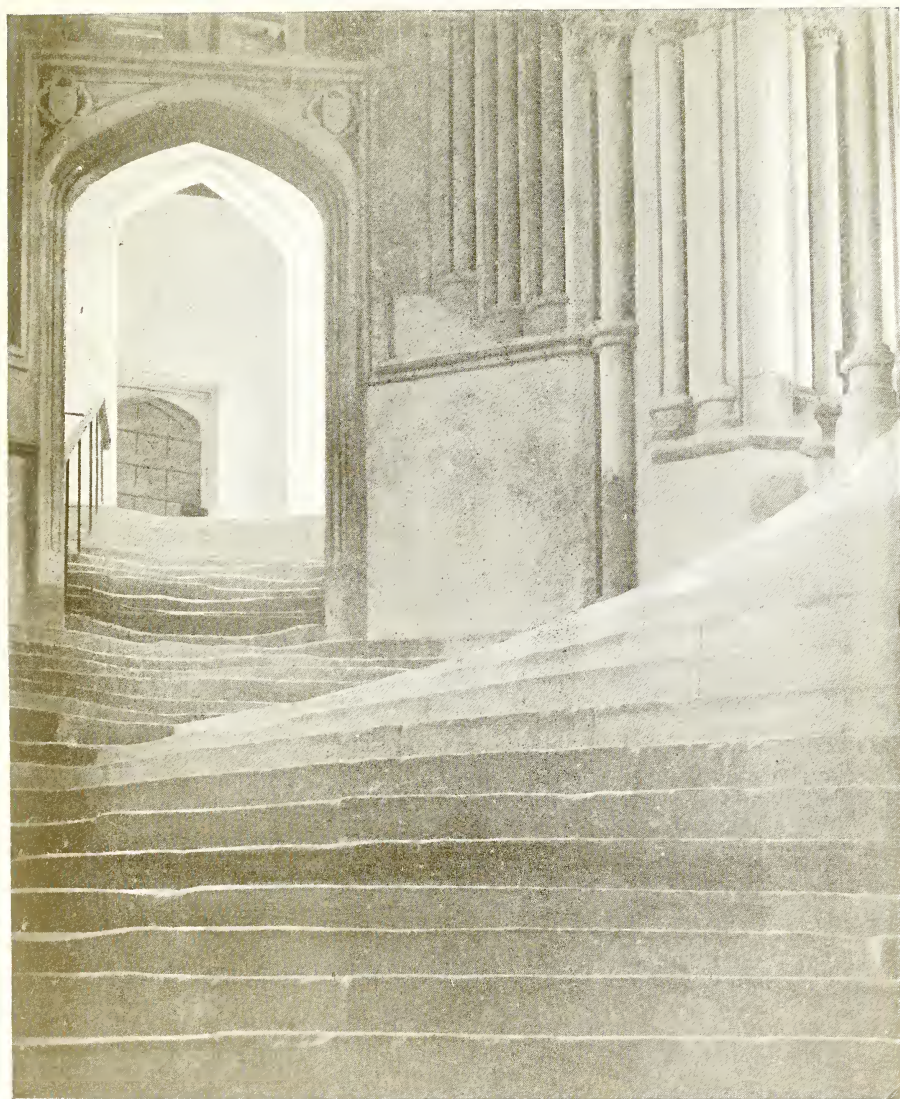
ART AND THE CAMERA

there, in contrast with the pervading mystery of its shadows.

To deal with architecture in this way demands the nicest investigation of problems of light and shadow. The values of lights, cross lights, and coloured lights have all to be studied, and so also has the influence of reflected light on shadow; but to a great extent such study must be for the purpose of simplification, so that a typical example of the characteristic beauty of the building may have its due importance at the point of emphasis, and imagination may be stimulated in regard to what is not fully revealed elsewhere. Study the light, and the details will come of their own accord where they are wanted; but if, on the other hand, you study the details of architecture, the effect of light and shade will evade you.

But, it may be objected, if light is so soft and stone so hard, are you not in danger of missing the essence of the subject, and of making the picture "woolly," when you permit the one quality to predominate at the expense of the other? There is no occasion for anxiety on this point so long as the treatment shows no indecision; and an opportunity for forcible definition, if it is required, occurs at the emphasized point. Besides, we must give the beholder of the picture credit for something. One would not go about telling one's friends that stonework was hard and solid, and we may be sure that when they see the picture, imagination will supply all the hardness and solidity that are necessary. It is the suggestion, not the categorical statement, that counts.

The accompanying pictures by that most successful exponent of the poetry of architecture,



A SEA OF STEPS

Theodorick H. Swain

“FROZEN MUSIC”

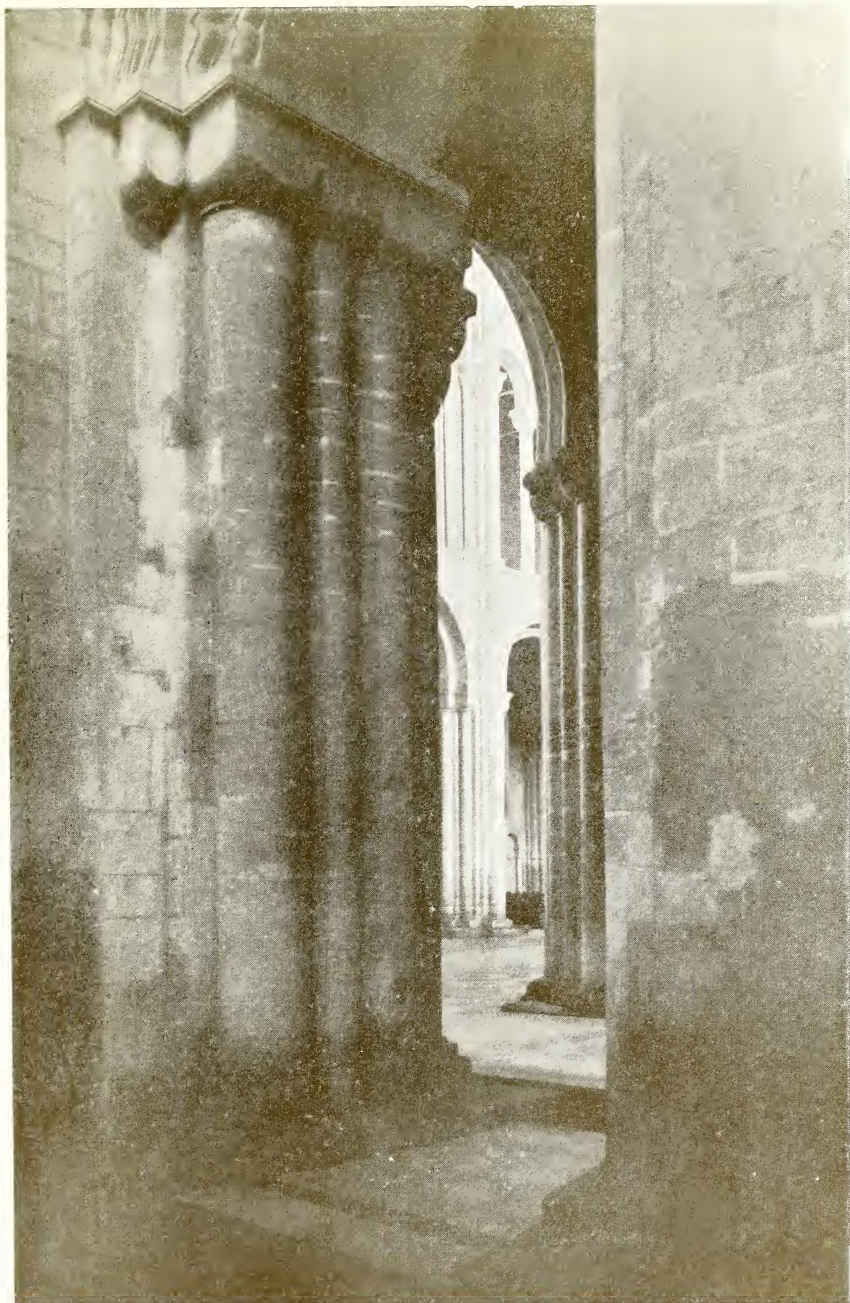
Mr. F. H. Evans, illustrate my meaning very effectively. His impressive rendering of the North Transept, York Minster, “In sure and certain Hope,” is an admirable example of how advantage may be taken of the incidence of illumination to accentuate such telling details as convey the character of the building; while elsewhere, in the depth and mystery of shadow, imagination supplies the elaboration that has been sacrificed to the pictorial purpose. In this way, and through the delicate play and softening influence of light, the work acquires a solemnity and suggestiveness that could not have been attained by dwelling on detail. The magnificence of the structure is dominated by the personal feeling of the artist, but loses nothing thereby, because he has been actuated by the sentiment of the place rather than by its material forms.

The importance of choosing a paramount idea from among the many impressions that crowd the mind in cathedral interiors is enforced by the highly original and enchaining composition “A Sea of Steps,” which will enable visitors to Wells Cathedral to find an unsuspected beauty in this remarkable stairway. This picture is the outcome of a definite impression and a single-minded purpose, in explanation of which I cannot do better than quote Mr. Evans’s own words: “The breaking crested wave-line of the mounting steps on the right into the Chapter House, and the broken water effect of the worn steps in the distance, which is a capital answer to it,” are what appealed to him, and consequently it is this undulatory movement that forms the leading theme and makes the special attraction of the picture. Doubtless

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the old architect who planned these steps prided himself on their peculiar lines, and possibly he may have been unconsciously inspired by the movement of the sea; but he could scarcely have foreseen the beautiful effect of time and use, and it has remained for Mr. Evans to show how they have imparted a new charm to the design. In the admirably judged and pleasing composition, in the telling emphasis obtained from the single high light, in the gradation of tone that gives the aerial perspective from the foreground to the distance, and in the texture of the stonework, this picture affords some further hints to the amateur.

"A Memory of the Normans" is another notable example of the treatment of architecture from the purely personal point of view. The glimpse of the illuminated nave, obtained from the south-west transept of Ely, makes a striking subject of emphasis, and the force and simplicity of the composition are in keeping with the massiveness of structure, a quality that combines with the round arches to give such majesty to Norman work. This characteristic is very strongly felt in the photograph, which furnishes an additional proof of the influence of an imagination that can grasp the poetry rather than the aspect of ancient buildings. Mr. Evans has given an incentive to a new order of work in architectural photography.



A MEMORY OF THE NORMANS

Theobald H. Wain

PORTRAITURE

Doubtless the most generally interesting, and probably the most important of the various branches of photography is portraiture. To represent the individual with fidelity, character, and a regard for decorative composition, to preserve the human entity as it lived, in something more enduring than the memory, so that it may still be seen by those separated by time or distance, is an ambition that may well stir the artist. In landscape, Nature, with all her moods, continues much the same through the ages, but the human being is distinct and individual, developing in a special set of conditions that cannot recur. Consequently it may be said that the portrait-man has a more exacting task than the interpreter of landscape. The truth of a portrait cannot be checked by posterity, which can only accept the statement as it is given by the artist, and his responsibility is therefore the greater.

Probably the average person if questioned as to what was the chief duty of the portrait-maker, would reply—To get a likeness. And if further asked what constitutes a likeness, would very probably say—The shape of the features, especially the eyes and mouth, the quality of the complexion, the lines or other marks on the face, the expression and the shade of the hair. Truly a resemblance based on these peculiarities might be recognizable, but it would be a very superficial, even a temporary affair. Such appearances are subject to transient change with every emotion, and to permanent change by time. The likeness seen by

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one person under one set of conditions will scarcely satisfy another who has known the subject in a different aspect. What is likeness? It is not altogether an objective matter that makes its appeal by a set arrangement of form and colour, so that what one sees every one else sees, and as to which there is no room left for diversity of opinion. It is at least to an equal extent subjective, depending on the point of view of the beholder, his mental attitude, and the degree of sympathy that he feels for the person portrayed. Love would certainly not accept a likeness made in hatred, and hate would laugh contemptuously at the presentment that appealed to love. Between these two extremes there are many variations. The friend, for instance, with a keen and penetrating appreciation of character would not praise the portrait made from a standpoint of complete indifference to the underlying individuality, by one who concerned himself only with physical peculiarities. Likeness, then, if it is understood to mean such surface developments as immediately attract the eye, is insufficient. Moreover, it is dangerous, for insistence on such appearances must involve the neglect of that which is more fundamental and permanent.

CHARACTER

Hence it seems that some other aim needs to be substituted for that of mere similitude, or, at least, it should be supplemented by something more trustworthy; and that which naturally suggests itself is character. Intelligent people value



MISS JESSIE KING

By J. CRAIG ANNAN

CHARACTER

and admire their friends by reason of the character that they personify, and with increased intimacy this becomes much more familiar than the shape of the features or the colour of the complexion. The plain people who are greatly loved are not only known to their friends by external forms; the "ugly" preachers who move large congregations are remembered by the spirit that animates their faces, and communicates itself to others. To some, no doubt, they even seem beautiful. Such admirers would be horrified at a portrait that registered nothing more than misshapen features. Those who earnestly devote themselves to the study of the human countenance therefore endeavour to depict character rather than physical peculiarities. Not that these should be altogether neglected, but where the spirit of an individuality has been caught, one may be pretty confident that the exterior resemblances are true enough, and there will be no occasion for laborious exactitude in this respect; indeed, if it is attempted it will only be to the detriment of what is more significant. Sometimes the merely physical aspect of a person calls for special recognition, as in the case, perhaps, of some types of beauty, where the lack of intelligence is forgotten in the external charm. But in a general way it is paying a beautiful woman a poor compliment to find in her only fascinating appearances of form and colour, and to miss the allurements of character, which, while it can transform a plain face, lends spirituality to a handsome one.

I can imagine some readers thinking that all this may be very true, that they quite agree as to the desirability of expressing the genius of a per-

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sonality, but that it is an elusive thing, and how are they to make sure of seizing it? If they are content to deal with form and colour, they may reflect, they have something tangible to work on, and they can at least produce a likeness of a sort, though it may not meet the highest requirements; but if they search for less obvious qualities, they may find that they are pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp. I quite sympathize with this point of view on the part of the amateur, and therefore I feel it the more needful to convince him that the road to the achievement of character is by no means so indefinite as it seems, and that by the aid of certain signposts, presently to be indicated, and of his own powers of perception, there is sufficient reason for him to hope for success.

It will be recognized that a great deal of characterization has been imparted by Mr. Craig Annan to the three accompanying examples of his work in portraiture. He is one of the leaders in the pictorial movement among photographers, and the methods that he has adopted are such as to give the fullest scope to his own feeling and observation. It is a happy state of things when the portrayer is predisposed towards a sympathetic appreciation of the character of his sitter, and I fancy that something of this kind must have occurred when Mr. Annan produced his portrait of the accomplished painter, Miss Jessie M. King. The original picture is on a large scale, but no one can fail to observe in the small reproduction a delicate perception of individuality, which manifests itself not only in the head, but also in the "movement" of the figure. The reserved tone, the spring of the line, like that of a bow, the

STRUCTURE

subtle modelling of the face, the character of the hand, the decorative effect of the broad dark shadow under the hat, combine to produce a portrait that strikes one as extremely expressive of the subject as well as of the idea, thus hinting at the grace of two personalities.

STRUCTURE

I have already said that likeness is both objective and subjective, and therefore it has to be sought in both directions. The objective side may be first considered.

When one thinks of all the possible variations that may be caused by reasons of health, activity, excitement, rest, thoughtfulness, sorrow, or joy, it is evident that a portrait based on any one of these conditions must constitute but a slight and partial record, unless it has qualities common to all. An enduring and comprehensive likeness, instead of depending on a temporary aspect or a transient mood, must rely on lasting material. Now the one unchanging thing in the adult human being is structure. There may be slight alterations as age advances, but for practical purposes the structure of the bones may be regarded as permanent, and it is by the manner in which these are set and carried that individual "movement" is imparted to the figure; while, as regards the face, the conformation of the skull is the underlying influence of characterization. This structural formation, therefore, is what primarily calls for attention. It is felt through the covering of flesh, which is sub-

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ject to all manner of changes, and is of secondary importance. One who looks beneath the surface will not give such accentuation to exterior contours as to miss the permanent and pervading expressiveness of structure. What is commonly known as "expression," the curve of the lips, the look of the eyes, is often artificial. People want to be seen at their best, and in this desire they may perhaps captivate the artist by displaying subtle arrangements that the mirror has shown to be becoming, but are very likely to prevent him from rendering a true picture. A special "expression" is not desirable in a portrait. Apart from the fact that it cannot be maintained with an appearance of natural vivacity for any length of time, it inevitably diverts attention from underlying attributes. A restful condition is what is required; this permits the significance of structure to have full sway.

The facial lines on the skin, the result of habitual moods, may be useful; but things of lesser value should not be allowed to outweigh those of the highest importance. Science now recognizes the indications of character that are obtainable from anthropometric measurements applied to the skull; the phrenologist, who formerly relied on "bumps," now takes his tape measure and deduces from the relative proportions of the cranial development the possibilities and limitations of the person examined. But in some respects science lags behind art, and what men of science are becoming aware of, painters have known, or perhaps felt, for many generations, as one may gather from some of the works of Old Masters.

“MOVEMENT”

Those who seek to portray the temperament of their sitters will therefore recognize the primary importance of emphasizing structure in the head and also in the figure, for the “movement” of the limbs is sometimes almost as expressive as the appearance of the face. Just as in the face it will be wise to keep superficialities in subjection, so in the figure the photographer should not be led away by folds and other details of clothing from thought of the structure underneath. Some folds will help to suggest the figure, and these will be retained, while others having an opposite influence are eliminated, unless specially wanted on account of their decorative value. The big lines of a figure are those that give “movement,” the lines, in fact, of the larger bones, and it is the appreciative treatment of these that relieves a portrait from the wooden, inanimate appearance that is too often seen in photographs. By enforcing the larger lines, and following their general direction without breaking them any more than can be helped by small variations, one may hope to impart suppleness and swing to the subject—or rather to leave the figure in possession of its natural “movement,” for it is generally through the erroneous accentuation of unimportant variations that this quality is lost.

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HANDS

While on this subject it may be useful to say a word about hands, which inevitably form a valuable addition to a picture, or else a serious detriment. They are most expressive members, but if they are shown in a nerveless, unsuggestive way, they are as likely as not to spoil an otherwise creditable work. Again, if they are forcibly depicted, with all their character displayed, there is always the danger that they will constitute a second point of focus in competition with the head. Truly it is not absolutely necessary that the head should be the most strongly emphasized point, and many good portraits have been made with the face only suggested in a half light, and the point of focus elsewhere. In such a case the hands, or one of them, might be accentuated very usefully. But usually it is understood that the head is the chief point of a portrait, and under such conditions the introduction of hands needs some ingenious planning. Perhaps they may be suggested in half-tone, or they may be the means of introducing a secondary light to help the composition. In any case they are not to be represented without a definite object in view, nor without such treatment as will make them significant. Unless, indeed, hands are introduced with a distinct artistic purpose, so that they may be helpful both to composition and character, it is better that they should be omitted altogether.

It will be observed that in the portrait by Mr. Coburn the hand has a definite and important *rôle*. It is not the chief point of focus, but it is so sug-



THE AUTHOR

BY ALVIN LANGDON COBURN

HANDS

gestive that it gives interest to one side of the picture, which, without it, would be devoid of meaning. The hand in this case fills a small space, but it occupies a large measure of attention, and is very needful both to the composition and theme of the picture, for the eyes are concentrated on the object that the fingers hold. Here is an unmistakable reason for the presence of the hand. The need in other instances may be less obvious, but it should never be entirely absent.

While special attention may be directed to the judicious treatment of the hand in this picture, it is well worth consideration on account of the simplicity of the arrangement, the manner in which it is directed to the illustration of a definite idea, and the absence of anything that could distract attention therefrom. It will be observed that the head does not lose through being placed in half-tone, and that the correctness of the relative values of the lights on the face and collar adds to the actuality. We are all familiar with pictures in which the light on the face is so forced that no scope is left for the greater brilliance of the collar, and the values of the whole picture are thrown out of gear, with the result that there is an irritating sense of something wrong, even on the part of those who do not recognize the cause. It is not thus that we see our friends. Their complexions are invariably darker than their starched linen when under an equal influence of light, and there is no reason whatever why their faces should be made to shine with an unnatural radiance. A sense of restraint and restfulness will be noticed, and a distinct note of originality in the composition. Though the work seems to have come together

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so easily, it may be surmised that many who ventured to place the figure so far to one side of the picture, and to leave so large a blank on the other, would find themselves in a difficulty. Something would seem incorrect or out of place, and in trying to rectify it they would be very likely to find that they were introducing further trouble elsewhere.

While there are suggestions to be gathered from this work I would strongly deprecate any attempt to imitate it. Mr. Coburn's temperament always comes out in his pictures, and the methods that he adopts, while essential to the spirit of his work, might be detrimental to that of others. There is always a tendency to imitate the manner of a successful man, and it cannot be too often said that this is not to be done without sacrificing the personal feeling necessary to artistic achievement.

SUBJECTIVE INFLUENCE

A portrait should not only be an expression of the individuality of the sitter, but also of the artist. Just now I stated that the character of the person depicted was to be brought out by attention to structure. This, however, is merely a basis to work on. One may be content with a simple and reserved statement of the underlying conformation, and may be pretty confident of success, for the work being true, yet making no forcible assertion, will offer abundant scope for the imagination. Every one who examines a portrait, or other picture, inevitably and all unconsciously reads something into it on his own account, and the

SUBJECTIVE INFLUENCE

more reserved the statement, the more surely will people who look at the representation of a familiar face find in it well-remembered shades of expression. They exist, not in the picture, but in the mind of the beholder, and he may see a different expression every time he looks at the work.

In the same way other people will see other attributes due to their own attitude towards the individual portrayed. His intimates will find their intimacy confirmed in the picture; it will always have some suggestion for them, and in the case of those who are very dear it will afford a breathing companionship. Those less acquainted, or unacquainted, with the subject of the portrait will also, if they are attracted by it at all, impart some vitality to it from their own store. This is where the subjective side of portraiture comes in. The beholder adds something—sometimes more, sometimes less, according to the degree of interest aroused. Sometimes the interest is purely personal, sometimes primarily artistic; it may be a political interest, the effect of hero-worship, the love of beauty, or even mere curiosity, but once the beholder is captivated, from whatever cause, he immediately proceeds to finish the picture according to his own mood, and entirely without knowing that he is thus helping the artist.

How many photographers, I wonder, take account of this unsolicited assistance? Many undoubtedly imagine that it is their business to do all the work themselves. There are some who jest at the idea of leaving anything to the imagination, like a student whom I heard say, on looking at a dreamy picture, "Why didn't he leave it all to the imagination?" It is I suppose a matter

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of temperament, but this much may be said with certainty—without imagination there can be no art; and it may be added with no less confidence that imagination is called for not only from the artist, but also from the spectator, and especially from the critic.

The aspirant in portraiture will do well to remember that there are other imaginations to be considered besides his own, and that if he stimulates them and draws them out they will merge with his to the common benefit, and will fill in the details that he has only suggested as material for them to work upon. If he wishes to appeal to a class that is poorly endowed with imagination there will be more finishing work for him to do; but a vivacious fancy likes to have plenty of employment. It is said that the great majority are not very well provided in this respect, and therefore those artists who wish to gain wide popularity are scrupulous about dotting their i's and crossing their t's, lest they should be accused of carelessness.

DIRECTNESS AND INDIVIDUALITY

Directness of means is one of the most valuable principles of art. It implies a definite object, a single-minded intention, and an unswerving aim. The object may be a simple record of essential truth, which, as explained, will delight the beholder by calling forth a response from his own imagination, or it may be that the portrait-maker determines to illustrate an aspect of char-

DIRECTNESS AND INDIVIDUALITY

acter that has made an irresistible impression on himself. In this case even a higher level of achievement is demanded. It is a great triumph to present such a delineation that others may unconsciously endow it with life, and I am not sure that any more valuable service can be performed; but art does not base its claim on any utilitarian merit; it is a spirit that speaks because it must. Hence the personal feeling of the artist is a thing to be prized; it is the utterance of the spirit-voice, and the critic should not repress it, but help to make it heard to most advantage. If the artist has received a strong impression and is moved to enforce his own reading of individuality, this is plainly a case where restraint would be a neglect of duty. There is a clear message to deliver, and he must deliver it. But first he should himself be convinced, and therefore inexperienced workers may be advised that unless they have studied their subject deeply and are endowed with unusual penetration, to say nothing of skill, they should regard with suspicion any inclination to take so definite a standpoint. It needs a big man to fill such a place, for he must either compel recognition, or fail utterly, and the failure in weak hands is apt to provoke ridicule through the very pretentiousness of the attempt.

The subject may not in every case establish a definite conviction; but where the impulse to take a strong line is felt, as in the most impressive examples of portraiture, it is the more needful not to be hampered by the thought of superficial likeness. Success in such ambitious effort depends, apart from truth of conception, on directness of aim. Character is the object, the character of the

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mental outlook—not little marks on the skin though sometimes such things are loosely spoken of as characteristic. The physical resemblance becomes general, not detailed, and attention is concentrated on the study of temperament. Minor points of similitude being kept in subjection, the interpreter can present his view with the greater certainty, and in thus expressing himself he gives life to his picture. The camera may provide the appearance; it needs the artist to impart the vital spark.

APPROPRIATE TREATMENT

One seldom meets with such a romantically conceived and refined portrait as that of "Frau Mathusius," by Mr. Craig Annan, which is the more to be appreciated because such works often have a theatrical tendency that gives them a very different stamp. Yet it cannot be said that this loses anything in picturesqueness through the reserve with which it has been treated. With the suggestion of piquancy in the head there is a decided hint of intellectuality, but the charm would not be felt in the same degree if competing details had been introduced in the costume; indeed, the character of the face is so much in accord with the style of dress that we seem to see a living representative of a past and more poetic age.

The lights on the buckles have been judiciously kept in subjection to the highest light on the collar, while the tone of the face is suggestive of the colour of the complexion. A little matter that perhaps calls for attention is the tone of the eyes. It



FRAU MATHUSIUS

By J. CRAIG ANNAN

APPROPRIATE TREATMENT

will be noticed that the whites are not quite white—they never are—but are appreciably darker than the collar, and that they gain consequently in liquidity and meaning. Reference may also be made to the extremely simple treatment of the hair, which has the effect of concentrating interest on the face. This work strongly enforces the importance of the decorative sense, and affords a reminder that a portrait is not merely the likeness of an individual, but a picture.

It is often overlooked that additional expressiveness is to be obtained through the decorative influence if applied with discrimination. Pictures of people are sometimes composed as if the beauty of lines and masses were a thing apart, a sort of gratuitous adornment in no way relating to the personality portrayed. To instance a ridiculous extreme, we may suppose a portrait of Lord Kit-chener treated with delicacy, while that, say, of a pretty actress is composed with severity of line and an impressive chiaroscuro. The error may not be carried to this length—but the suggestiveness of line and tone is seldom taken into full account. If the subject is graceful, let the composition be so also, but if forceful and determined, as a soldier might be; thoughtful and serious, as a clergyman or physician; wayward and fanciful, as poets and musicians sometimes are, it is quite possible to devise a scheme of treatment that will be in accord with such qualities. Youth will occasionally appear in a picture of sombre tone, and age may be gaily depicted with piquancy of handling and sparkling lights on the white hair. Either subject may, of course, be seen under such conditions, but the artistic instinct would reverse

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them—unless it happen that there is some peculiar and evident reason for laying stress on the melancholy of youth or the light-heartedness of age.

PICTURING AN IDEA

While grace and purity of character are appropriately associated with elegance of line and refinement of tone, there are other aspects of humanity that demand totally different treatment. This is illustrated in the forcible picture of "The Etching Printer," by Mr. J. Craig Annan. The sitter may be recognized as Mr. William Strang, but the intention is not so much to picture his personal appearance as his deep absorption in his work. It is a picture of an idea, but the idea is strikingly illustrative of a phase of character, and therefore, though the composition contains more than is really necessary to a portrait—and, in fact, is not meant as an example of portraiture—it really embodies some of the main requirements of the art. Regarded as a character study it is very powerful, the energy and determination that belong to the individual, and are concentrated on his task, being insisted on in a manner that brings these qualities home at a glance. Everything is designed to enforce the suggestion of intense pre-occupation. The bold and simple method and the broad shadow are helpful, and especially so the firm and uncompromising lines. It will be observed that the figure fills a triangle, and the arrangement is very suggestive of concentration on a given point. It is true that interest does not culminate on the point of the triangle to



THE ETCHING PRINTER

By J. CRAIG ANNAN

THE USE OF DETAIL

the right, being arrested, so to speak, half way; but the continuation of the line helps the sense of direction in the flow of energy and thought. There is much vitality and movement exactly where it is wanted, and one seems to feel the impulse moving thence in a well-indicated direction. There is no suggestion of a man sitting for his portrait, but the intimation of personality is very strong.

THE USE OF DETAIL

It is somewhat difficult to judge how far detail can be advantageously used, and it may be helpful to submit one or two simple propositions that may possibly commend themselves as guiding principles. The first is that elaboration, wherever placed, makes a point of emphasis, and if it appears all over a picture, the result is that everything is accentuated and therefore nothing is given special importance. This is, of course, fatal to expressiveness and also, it may be added, to the general design, for it is essential that every picture should have a well-marked main theme and a single focus, though there may also be points of secondary, or subdued, emphasis to help the composition. Hence elaboration is out of place where it does not enforce the leading motive.

The other consideration is perhaps less obvious. There is a proper point of view for every picture, that is to say, it is seen best at a particular distance from the eye. Now any elaboration that does not have its full effect from this standpoint is superfluous. To make a closer inspection of it

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would be to miss the effect of the picture as a whole.

Detail, it should be remembered, is of little value on its own account, but it may be of much importance in the assistance that it can render to the whole scheme. It may be said that the smaller a picture is, the more scope it gives for minute elaboration; but this need not be taken as a hard and fast principle. At least it must be evident that a very large picture is seen from a view-point that does not permit of the examination of little things. On the other hand a miniature is held close to the eye, often even inspected through a magnifying-glass, so that its most delicate and precise touches may be fully appreciated. There are, of course, degrees in the possibilities of elaboration, and detail may be suggested effectively, though not necessarily with minute precision, in a big work. Rembrandt has shown how detail may assist emphasis, but he relied chiefly on light for this, employing his elaboration only as an incidental aid. The amount of definition discernible depends on the quality of the light. A very strong light needs to be treated broadly and not to be broken up by incidents if it is to have full effect; but where there is a clear and gentle illumination of the focussed point the details will be very well revealed.

The methods of the miniature painter might well be studied in connection with the taking of small portraits by photography, notably the single point of focus that generally falls on the eyes, and the sympathetic finish that does not preclude that subconscious assistance previously referred to on the part of the spectator. Elaboration is indispens-

A SEPARATE ATMOSPHERE

able to a miniature, for it is seen at close quarters, and some of the best exponents have shown how dainty and intricate *minutiae*, such as lace-work and jewels, can be kept in subjection by atmosphere and soft shadows. This is a possibility peculiar to the miniature, and there seems no reason why advantage should not be taken of it in photographs of small size. In the larger works more breadth is required, and very small work would be wasted because invisible from the proper view-point.

A SEPARATE ATMOSPHERE

It is important to surround the subject with an atmosphere that is the special property of the picture, existing only within its frame, and having no relation to the atmosphere of the place in which it happens to hang. On looking at a picture the imagination wanders into a different world, leaving the real and turning to the ideal. A strict line of demarcation is required where the thresholds join, so that there can be no chance of mistaking the boundary; and it is particularly desirable that the ideal figure should remain well within his frame, and not attempt to trespass into the realm of reality. One sometimes sees a portrait so sharply defined against a black background that all sense of atmosphere is destroyed, and the subject seems to be projected in front of the frame like a bas-relief, straying into a world that is not its own, instead of contentedly inhabiting its proper region. This sort of thing spoils all the mystery and

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poetry of art, and it is as if the author of the work assumed that because he was making a portrait he was privileged to neglect the principles that would be applied to any other kind of picture. It is curious that those who practise the "realistic" style are the most liable to forget the value of atmosphere. A figure to look real requires space to move in and air to breathe.

ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

The artistic temperament may be said to tend in the direction of synthesis rather than in that of analysis, that is to say, towards the combination and moulding of realities or assumed facts in preference to the investigation of their character. Where such tendency is given full rein it is a source of danger that may place those who indulge it in the absurd position of arguing correctly from incorrect premises. It would be easy to point to familiar instances, but I will merely refer to the example frequently provided by reflections in still water. The image of the subject you are depicting—tree, house, or whatever it may be—if you accept it at a superficial valuation, is just as solid and clearly defined as the reality, and, indeed, is different in no respect, except that it is upside down. Now, if on this ground you decide to depict a solid house upside down you are drawing your conclusion from incorrect premises, and the issue is not likely to be satisfactory. But if you take the analytical standpoint, the result becomes very different. The idea of an upside-down house may strike you as humor-

ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

ous, or fantastic as the magic of a fairy-tale, according to your way of looking at things, but, at any rate, you see that it cannot be based on reality. And then it will occur to you that you are not looking at a house at all, but at water, and therefore it is your business to represent the water, not the house; that the appearance of the building is merely a phantom, and that it must be treated as such, and on no account be allowed to assume the reality that belongs only to the water. The reflector and the reflection are essentially different; one is a material fact, the other only a visual appearance. Unfortunately, one often sees the apparition treated as if it were a fact, and the fact so neglected that it has scarcely even a ghostly existence.

If the image were reflected on a pure mirror there would be no apparent difference, except in position, between the reflection and the reality, and if so depicted the one would look as substantial as the other; in fact, it would be a puzzle to say which was the right way up of the picture. But when we look at Nature we distinguish the visionary from the solid in a manner that is called instinctive, but is in truth only an effort of reason, an example of conscious or sub-conscious analysis. An alert analytical faculty will make perception still more keen, so that more delicate shades of significance will become apparent; and it is to be remembered that whatever is forcibly perceived is certain to have an influence on the picture. If an object is perceived and not understood, the influence is in the direction of weakening the result by making it less intelligible and less expressive.

Such considerations suggest the desirability of

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leavening the synthetic tendency by the investigation of the subjects dealt with in order to gauge their proper relation to each other and to the picture as a whole. In this way we arrive at the essential meaning and expression of things, we feel their underlying qualities, and the resulting picture has more suggestion and surer grip than one that is a mere synthesis of what is taken for granted. Things can be rendered more sympathetically because they are understood, for it is only through the understanding that genuine sympathy is to be attained.

THE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE

There are some, I am well aware—and I am not sure that they are not in the majority—among followers of art, who regard anything like analysis with suspicion. It is all very well for the critic, they say, but the artist must give play to imagination and feeling; these are the guides that he must rely upon if his work is to have poetry, or even to rise above the commonplace, and if he allows them to be restrained by the kind of reasoning that belongs to science rather than to art, he will never do anything worth doing.

This is so general a view that it ought not to be passed over, especially as it arises from an appreciation of the highest function of the artist, which certainly is, by the aid of his imagination, to find new beauties, or to combine old ones with new poetry or piquancy. This, indeed, is synthesis,

THE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE

and it is quite true that such matters as imagination, emotion, temperament, and the sense of beauty are not to be analysed, even if we take them singly, much less so when they are in combination.

Must we, then, accept them just as they are, go where they lead us, and do as they prompt us, without question? I am inclined to think not. If we followed them implicitly we could not hold ourselves bound by any law or custom of ordinary life which did not happen to fit in with their guidance, and in that case we should certainly attract the attention of the police—say at the National Gallery when our desire to possess a Velasquez became irresistible. Clearly, therefore, these impulses must be restrained for work-a-day purposes; but it may be said that when we come to make a picture there are no policemen. We are under no restraint, and we can do as we please.

Yet the restraining influence that served us so well when looking at pictures by Old Masters, may very well be useful when we are producing pictures of our own. If we could exclude it altogether fancy would run riot, and there would be no logic or sequence in our work beyond that which came unsought and at haphazard through the uncertain agency of an emotional imagination. Such incoherent performance, however, is not likely to occur, for, in spite of ourselves, we shall endow the work with a certain rationality; we cannot help thinking, whether we will or no, and thus the restraining influence will in some degree make itself felt.

If this influence, which is no more nor less than reason, with all its informing and purifying

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power, is admitted at all, at what point are we to cry, "Hold, enough!" and bar its further entry? Moreover, seeing that we have to let it in uninvited, would it not be well to do so with a good grace, to recognize its value, and instead of a grudging admission to extend it a welcome? I fancy that most of us will agree that this is the proper course; but then, if we once cultivate an intelligent control of our work we can never turn back, or even stop still; for we must go forward under this impulse, which has a peculiar faculty for gaining force. It brings a discriminating perception and an accretion of knowledge that grow with geometrical progression, and the result is that we become analysts as well as synthesists, even, it may be, against our own convictions.

Is it really right that this should be against our convictions? It was not against the convictions of Leonardo da Vinci, who was not only one of the greatest of painters, but also one of the most careful, persistent, and original of analysts that the world has seen. It was not against the convictions of Michael Angelo, whose close investigation of the human frame gave a new direction to art. It was not against the convictions of Velasquez, whose analytical treatment of light was the basis of the fresh interpretation that he gave to Nature, and still survives vigorously as the fundamental principle of modern art.

THE INNER MEANING

Hence it appears that the common distrust in which the analytical standpoint is held in relation to art is in the nature of superstition, rather than of firmly established principle. There is no reason why synthesis should be weakened by having an analytical foundation. The two things are not opposed, one is only the natural development of the other. It is surely better that you should reason from facts that you have yourself examined and understood, than from assumptions that may or may not be justified; and synthesis, therefore, so far from being weakened, is, in fact, immeasurably strengthened by analysis.

There will be more poetry in the work instead of less, a more penetrating vision of underlying impulses, a less obstructed channel to the spirit of Nature; and, above all, progress, with the possibility of original achievement. On the other hand, the synthetic process, if it stands alone, has little chance of discovering new sources of inspiration, but is more likely to continue ringing the changes on well-worn themes.

Artistic photographers should, I think, be prompt to recognize the value of an exact estimate of the material that they are combining for pictorial expression. To extend the accurate reasoning that governs the use of their instrument to the subjects that it depicts is only a natural step. Selection is necessarily exercised in determining the point of view, but should not stop short there, for it needs to be carried with no less searching discrimination into

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all the parts of the scene represented. It is through the weighing and sifting of these that one may hope to give scope to the imaginative impulse. Sentiment always requires a framework of logic to hold it in place and to give it force, just as the beautiful conception of a cathedral needs a solid and scientific structure to give it permanence. So with a picture, the direction of lines, the location of masses, the employment of detail, the placing of emphasis, and especially the investigation of light, demand such close examination as will ensure the suitability of the material to form a structure which the sentiment may vitalize with security to itself—*mens sana in corpore sano*.

Of course analysis need not overshadow or take the place of synthesis; a just balance is to be aimed at between them. If there is undue predominance one way or the other you may get the skeleton without the life, or the spirit may be associated with a flimsy body; but when the facts are verified, and judiciously combined with a due regard for their power and significance, you get soundness and vitality in the result.

To achieve this the artist should be his own and his most severe critic. This is seldom the case, simply because he, as a rule, does not sufficiently cultivate the analytical faculty. No doubt the faculty exists in different degrees, but it is difficult to believe that any one can go about his business entirely without it. The cultivation of this power consists not only in seeing things as they are, but in inquiring why they are so, and how they might be improved; it will enable my readers to form a closer estimate of their work for themselves, and to correct it accordingly, before submitting it for

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the admiration of others. And, perhaps, also their work may hint at the inner meaning of things, at the eternal Ideal of which material beauty is the reflection.

THE END



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